NONA AGNOS (Here super-boss of wife Criminal Nicole, the ex-superstar of Philippine movies leaves the LA court which had dismissed drug charges against her, with lawyer Sherwin Edelberg, aunt Belen Villanueva. (Story on Page A7.)

WORLD / A23

Britney Spears loses custody of 2 sons

NEWS / A2

Malaysia threatens to pull out peace monitors in Mindanao

NEWS / A7

4 rescued crew members recount coworkers eaten alive by sharks off Palawan

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Wednesday, October 3, 2007 | 64 Pandiona / Vol. 22 | No. 297 | P18 | website: www.inquirer.net

PNP chief: My calling card not meal coupon

By Alexis Pope

IT'S A CALLING CARD from Camp Crame general Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., not a meal coupon, he said in a statement to reporters Tuesday.

THE JOKER IS WILD

Probe of PDI, 4 solons sought over leak on secret meeting

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

SEN. JOKER ARROYO HAS FORMALLY asked the Senate to investigate the senators and other officials present at the Sept. 26 executive session with former Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, for violating the secrecy rule enclosed-door sessions.

Arroyo also asked the Senate to investigate the leakages, which spread unnamed sources in reporting what transpired in the late-night executive session with Neri, a key witness in the controversial $329 million deal with China's ZTE Corp. involving the National Broadband Network (NBN) project.

During a 10-hour Senate hearing earlier on Sept. 26, Neri, the former director general of the National Economic and Development Authority, continually invoked executive privilege in refusing to answer ques-

ARROYO: The question echoes: "Did last session's public the falsehoods that became the basis for the [re]public article?"

Spy vs spy: Nica revamp triggers demoralization

By Fe Zamora and Tarra Quismundo

A PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVE TO IMPROVE the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (Nica) has triggered a scramble for over 200 new positions but has cown demoralization in its ranks, the Inquirer has learned.

The new game move created by Malacañang to strengthen the role and authority of Nica, which has been designated Intere.

GMA: NBN deal is dead

DIFFICULT DECISION EXPLAINED: President Arroyo and some Cabinet members hold a meeting with Chinese President Hu Jintao in Shanghai on Tuesday to explain the's aborting the NBN-ZTE project.

China accepts decision with understanding

By Michael Lim Ubac

SHANGHAI (VIA PLDT)—President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday told Chinese President Hu Jintao that the Philippines had decided to stop the controversial $329-million deal for the National Broadband Network (NBN) project.

The NBN contract with China's ZTE Corp. sparked an explosive controversy that has hounded Ms Arroyo's administration since the deal was signed on April 21.

In a closed-door bilateral meeting, Ms Arroyo took it upon herself to "explain" to President Hu her decision to stop the contract.

"At this point, the President explained 'the difficult decision' not to continue with the NBN contract," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, recalling Ms Arroyo's words during the 50-minute meeting with the Chinese leader.

THE OTHER SIDE UNDERSTANDS: President Hu Jintao (2nd from right) and other Chinese officials listen to Ms Arroyo and her officials with "understanding" about scrapping NBN-ZTE but that the [RP-China] relationship "is in very good shape."

No TRO on 'Hello Garci' probe; SC grills petitioners

By Lelia B. Salaverria

SUPREME COURT JUSTICES YESTERday invoked public interest in the wiretap of the electoral process as they grilled the lawyers of two retired generals who had sought to stop the renewed Senate inquiry into the 'Hello Garci' wiretapping scandal.

After hearing hours of oral arguments, the high court merely required the contending parties to submit their respective memoranda containing their positions within 15 days.

Earlier in the session, Justice Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez said the retired justices... Santiago Kapunan and General... de Aguinaldo—would do them for the country if they pushed for the Senate inquiry.

"I think your petitioners will be

No more Senate appearance for Abalos: See you in court

By Beverly T. Malvicidal

ONE DAY AFTER HE RESIGNED AS Commission on Elections chair, Benjamin Abalos Sr. announced that he had no intention of further appearing at the Senate inquiry on the controversial broadband deal and said he would rather use his accusers in court.

"What else could they extract from me," said Abalos, who attended his final formal session at the Comelec yesterday and then bade its officials and employees goodbye. (See related story on Page A6.)

Abalos was visibly angry at the treatment he got from the senators last week. He had vowed not to show up at the Senate probe but decided to attend after accusations against him appeared to be gaining use of hand. Abalos said he did not plan to attend the hearing on its scheduled resumption

Mike A: I never said 'Back off'

By Tarra Quismundo

IMMEDIATELY ON THE DEFENSIVE upon returning home from a foreign trip, the man in the eye of the latest political storm is his the Arroyo presidency yesterday denied ever uttering the now infamous words "Back off."

"I just want to clarify, I never said 'back off.' That is not even in my vocabulary," the husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo said upon his arrival, even before the media could fire off any questions.

"And I never pointed a finger at Joey de Venecia," Jose Miguel Arroyo said at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA).

Businessman Jose "Joey" de Venecia III, son of Speaker Jose de Venecia, set off a major controversy two weeks ago when he testified at a Senate inquiry into the National Broadband Network

BACK IN: Mike Arroyo arrives from Europe via Hong Kong on Tuesday afternoon. He left on the eve of the start of the Senate NBN-ZTE probe.

Razon now most powerful businessman, says JDV son

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

BUSINESSMAN ENRIQUE RAZON HAS joined President Macapagal-Arroyo on her state visit to China, leaving unanswered the allegation of former Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri that the tycoon had threatened him not to allow a friend to get into Manila's port business.

Razon, chair and president of International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI), had convinced Ms Arroyo to grace the opening of ICTSI's latest overseas expansion—Bristol Port, one of China's top 10 commercial ports.

Razon came to China on his own plane.

Businessman Jose "Joey" de Venecia III said he was not surprised Razon remained in the good graces of the President.

"In the the most powerful businessman in the country? I believe he is now the most powerful person not only because of his closeness to President Arroyo but also to First

ENRIQUE RAZON: To China with GMA in inaugural non-ICTSI port.

Heads of 2 Koreas meet for historic summit

SEOUL—AS UNSMILING NORTH KOrean leader, Kim Jong-il, welcomed South Korea's President Roh Moo-hyun to Pyongyang on Tuesday displaying scant ceremonious warmth or entertained crowds cheered the start of the second-ever summit between the divided Korean since World War II.

The greeting was in stark contrast to the first North-South summit in 2000, when Kim greeted then South Korean President Kim Dae-jung with smiles and clasped both his hands tightly in an emotional moment that reflected the North Korean strongman's image in South Koreans and the world. They also harmonized while singing patriotic songs.

This time, Kim appeared reserved and unsentimental, walking slowly and occasionally clapping lightly to encourage the crowd of thousands at the outdoor welcome ceremony, who

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WHAT'S INSIDE

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- **VILLAR SEES** doom for RP-Japan act /A5
- **4 NAVY COMMANDOS** slain in Basilan clash /A5

Malaysia wants out of peace process

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3443 Series of 2007

KL impatient over slow pace of talks

MALAYSIA HAS THREATENED to withdraw monitors overseeing a four-year ceasefire between the Philippine military and the country's biggest Muslim separatist guerrilla group because of delays in peace talks, sources said yesterday.

Tension has risen lately between the army and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), with each side accusing the other of breaking the truce during a skirmish on the island of Basilan last week.

Removing at least four Navy commandos and 10 rebels died in another firefight on Basilan, as troops pursued the Abu Sayyaf group, which has close links with the MILF. (See related story on Page A5.)

A resumption in the peace talks, scheduled to take place in the Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur next month, is in doubt again after four postponements. The talks broke down a year ago amid disagreements over the size and wealth of a proposed autonomous homeland for Muslims on the southern island of Mindanao.

Getting impatient

Government and rebel sources told Reuters the Malaysian government was getting impatient, and threatened during an informal meeting in Kuala Lumpur last week to recall its 38 observers to pressure the rebels to resume talks.

Mohagher Iqbal, the rebels' chief negotiator, told Reuters in a phone interview from his hideout on Mindanao that any withdrawal of Malaysian soldiers would endanger the truce and harm implementation of development projects.

"If that happens, it would have a big impact on the peace process," Iqbal said.

Unarmed Malaysian soldiers have been in Mindanao since 2004 as part of an effort to end nearly 40 years of conflict that has killed more than 120,000 people and displaced millions.

Libya and Brunei also have small contingents in the monitoring team.

Iqbal said last week's meeting in Kuala Lumpur had been "productive" but had failed to fix a date for formal talks.

Not poles apart

"The differences were not really poles apart, we've narrowed the gaps from where we started two years ago," Iqbal said.

"But our counterparts could not commit to anything without the approval of the political leadership in Manila," he said.

"The government must have political will to conclude the peace process." Last week, the military accused MILF members of helping a band of Abu Sayyaf rebels during a firefight on Basilan island and threatened to file a protest to a ceasefire panel.

The MILF countered by saying troops had entered rebel territory without coordinating with the panel, and had attacked several camps.

There was no word on any MILF involvement in yesterday's fighting, sparked by a pre-dawn raid on a suspected Abu Sayyaf hideout.

Focus of attention

Mindanao has been a focus of international attention because Western governments believe it has been a training base for Islamic militants with links to al-Qaeda and regional group Jemaah Islamiyah.

Japan has been funding about ₱1 million worth of social and economic projects, including repairs of school buildings and installation of potable water systems.

The World Bank has a separate ₱1 million project helping set up cooperatives to start and manage small businesses, such as copra and rice production. *Reuters*

GMA open to meeting with Jonas Burgos' ma

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-AR- Arroyo is open to meeting with the mother of the missing activist Jonas Burgos, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said yesterday.

Bunye made the remark in response to reports that Edith Burgos, the widow of press freedom fighter Jose Burgos and mother of the missing Jonas, expressed her doubt about Mrs. Arroyo's dedication to human rights in the country.

"The President is open to such a meeting," Bunye said yesterday just before boarding the presidential flight bound for Shanghai where President Macapagal-Arroyo was scheduled to visit.

"I hope such a meeting takes place," Bunye added.

Mr. Arroyo on Monday instructed the newly installed PNP chief Director General Avelino Razon to make an improved human rights situation his legacy when he retires from the service in September 2008.

"Let us give the new PNP chief Jonny Razon the benefit of the doubt, he is now on the job and president to exert best efforts to do whatever is needed," Bunye told reporters.

He said Ms. Arroyo was "dead serious" about solving the extra-judicial killings of leftist activists and journalists which he said "happened not just now but in several preceding and administrations."

"She wants to finally put an end to that... violence," he said.

Norman Bordadora

Prosecutors won't object to Atong's lotto consultancy

GOVERNMENT PROSECUTORS have no objection to Charlie "Atong" Ang's petition to the Sandiganbayan seeking the reversal of its earlier ruling that barred him from flying to Cambodia for a possible consulting job in a gaming company.

"The people submits the instant motion to the wise discretion of the court," said Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio in a one-page comment submitted to the anti-graft court's Special Division.

Ang, a well-known former casino habitué and a gambling buddy of ousted President Joseph Estrada, rendered a jab offer in August from 000 Corporation, which operates a lottery in Cambodia.

Citing his "expertise" as a former consultant in the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. in the Estrada administration, 000 executives wrote Ang asking him to help their company.

In his request to be allowed to fly to Cambodia, Ang had told the Sandiganbayan the job would be his ticket to settling his debts, to earn if when he had to pay the P220-million penalty he could be passed on him after he pled guilty to a lesser offense in the plunder case against Estrada in which he was convicted.

Estrada was convicted of two counts of plunder and was sentenced to 40 years in prison. His conviction is under appeal.

The Sandiganbayan Special Division jerked Ang's petition for a travelling travel pass to Cambodia, citing the possibility he would leave the jurisdiction of the court.

In placing Ang under two years's probation four months ago, the court ordered him not to participate in any form of gambling and to get the court's permission every time he wants to leave Quezon City.

In his motion for reconsideration, Ang through his lawyers said he could not "simply accept and differ with the generosity of this court."

He also said his wealth should be the terms and conditions for travel that the court may impose—like posting up a travel bond—to guarantee his return.

"I really need that job to settle my accounts. I have no job offers here in the country," Ang had told the Inquirer in an earlier interview. Jaroslyn D. Uy

Corrections

IN THE SEPT. 27 ISSUE, an Across the Nation story on Page A16—"Preserving original Mandaluyan folk music"—misstated the name of the current director of the Center for Cultural Arts Studies of Mandaluyan State College. The director is professor Ilee Emmanuel—not Manuel—Asuncion. The name artiste also misstated Asuncion's undergraduate course. Asuncion earned a Bachelor of Music—not Bachelor of Science in Music Education—degree.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, a photo caption on Page A10 misspelled the names of two members of the House of Representatives. They are Comelec-list First District Rep. Dete—not Date—Arroyo and Occidental Mindoro Rep. Carlo—not Gerlo—Villaroza.

* * *

IN THE OCT. 2 ISSUE, a "Did you know" item on Page A17 of the Metro section misstated that Saras Meron Inc. was based in Pasay City. The country's pioneer pajamy maker was based in Cebu Pilar.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, a story on Page 16—"Six more valley fever cases"—misstated the age of the mother of nurse Jessica Fernando. Mary Ejemiro is 102—not 82—years old.

* * *

Readers may send their requests, comments or clarifications to the Inq mail, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 888 Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Blanco de Dorao, Makati City, fax No. 897-97-02-96, e-mail address: the-desk@inquirer.com.ph or newsdesk@inquirer.com.ph, or fax No. 897-0-0294, data Studies Advocate, fax phone number is 897-5808 Local 262.

The Daily Gospel

Wednesday, October 3, 2007
26th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Neh 2:1-8
Gospel: Luke 9:57-62

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."

To another Jesus said, "Follow me." But he answered, "Let me first go bury you, for first I want to bury my father." And Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their dead; as for you, leave them and proclaim the kingdom of God."

Another said to him, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me say goodbye to my family." And Jesus said to him, "Whoever has put his hand to the plow and looks back is not fit for the kingdom of God."

Commentary

Nehemiah is a servant. As he extends to the king, his cupbearer is rewarded. He tells the king of the city of his ancestors lying in ruins and asks if he can return to rebuild it. Then he would return as the servant of the king. He is given leave and privileges and he also receives letters for safe conduct, for travel. The discerning hand of God upon him again is manifested in unbelievers. Ahasuerus and the Israelite people—remnants of Israel who, amidst prophets and people to once again worship God in their own place. Do we appreciate others who are not of our religion, community, who are wise, gracious, and generous towards those who dwell in their nation and yet seek to serve another God?

We claim to be followers of Jesus, the Son of Man who had no place to lay his head; we know we shelter no family. But those who said they would follow him and his Father do no other work but the work of God alone. They obey God's will, bringing hope and true worship of God to all, along with the good news that what we do to one another, our real value as persons is known to God himself, for our service of us—Jesus, the prophet, whose very word is flesh.

Villar sees doom for RP-Japan pact

SENATORS ARE UNLIKELY TO RATIFY a free trade agreement with Japan in the dead's present form, Senate President Manuel Villar said yesterday.

Officials have been unable to convince the legislators that the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement Upstat would be beneficial to the Philippines, said Villar.

The agreement, signed in September 2006, would remove import tariffs on more than 90 percent of goods traded between the two Asian economies and open the largely closed Japanese labor market to Filipino health workers.

But the Senate must ratify the agreement for it to become effective, which legislators have yet to do amid claims that the deal favors Japan.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has described the agreement as an economic priority.

"Personally I'm not impressed with the so-called economic benefits," Villar, seen as a likely candidate in the May 2010 presidential election, told reporters.

Villar, also the majority leader, said he had not read and would still be convinced of the deal's merits, although he favors renegotiation.

Environmental groups have campaigned against the treaty allegedly because it would allow Tokyo to dump hazardous waste in the Philippines disguised as exports.

Villar said the activists "were better at preserving their case."

The free trade agreement is one of a raft of bilateral or regional deals being negotiated or signed by Asian countries amid a breakdown in the Doha round of the World Trade Organization trade talks.

Apart from his reservations over the trade deal with Japan, Villar said he thought the Philippines was "doing well" economically.

"We know we're on the verge of a take-off," he said.

He claimed that an Asian boom rather than Ms Arroyo's leadership was mainly responsible for that.

The Trade Union Congress of the Philippines said it expected Japan to eventually outsource "significant job dislocation as a consequence of reduced, if not zero tariffs that will allow cheaper imports into the country."

TUCP spokesman Alex Aguilar called on the government to set aside an initial P2 billion to provide a "safety net" for workers who may lose their jobs as a result of the free trade treaty. He said the P2 billion could cover emergency assistance as well as skills retooling programs to enable displaced workers to get new jobs.

Meanwhile, the Sikuyog Magbubukid ng Pilipinas claimed that the Japan would turn the Philippines into a giant landfill for Japanese wastes, citing a landfill being constructed in Tarlac, Gerne.

Willy Machella, SMP international deputy secretary general, ignored Cavite Gov. Ayong Maliksi as earlier announcing that the landfill would be for old appliances and electronic products from Japan.

The 84-hectare landfill, to be located in Barangay Lupang in Tarlac, will be placed near a river that drains into Puerto Azul and Sandoval, Machella claimed.

He said the landfill would pose a very serious danger to the lives and livelihood of people in "definitely" Tarlac and the neighboring town of Mangatarlac. AFP and Jerome Aning

4 Navy commandos slain in Basilan clash

By Nikko Dizon

FOUR MEMBERS OF THE PHILIPPINE Navy's elite fighting force and 10 suspected pirates were killed in an encounter yesterday on an island off Basilan, the military reported.

The fatalities on the government side were enlisted personnel from Unit 6 of the Naval Special Operations Group (Sesog), Lt. Col. Ariel Caralilan, Navy spokesperson, told reporters.

A lieutenant junior grade and an enlisted man were wounded and were in stable condition at Camp Gov. Navarro Hospital of the Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom) in Zamboanga City, Caralilan said. He did not identify the fatalities, however, pending notification of their next of kin.

The Sesog is the former Special Warfare and Action Group (Swag), the equivalent of the US Navy Seals.

Lawless group

Caralilan said the firefight took place on Luuk Island, some 15 miles northeast of Basilan province, shortly after midnight yesterday.

He said the leader of the "lawless armed group," identified as alyas Sadikul, along with his brother Faisal, were among the fatalities on the pirates' side.

He said Sadikul's group was engaged in criminal activity and the military was "not discounting the possibility of its affiliation with the Abu Sayyaf terrorist group."

A Westmincom statement said the military operation was launched following reports Sadikul's group had been harassing residents of the island.

Naval Forces Western Mindanao (Comnavfor) under Admiral Emilio Wimping dispatched members of Sarsog and the Special Operations Group of Marine Battalion Landing Team 7 to check on the reports when they encountered Sadikul's group.

At least 20 armed men engaged the government troops.

Mission accomplished

Despite the casualties, the operation was successful, Caralilan said.

"Our objective was met, accomplished. The bandits scampered away in different directions," he said.

Westmincom said the Sadikul brothers were followers of the Sayyaf leader Ameer Abubakar who was killed during the kidnapping of Marilyn Chua in Sibuta several years ago.

"[They] confiscate the fishermen's catch, still at large and hardcore members of the Abu Sayyaf," Wimping said.

An Abu Sayyaf member, meanwhile, was killed while a soldier was wounded in a 30-minute gunbattle in Barangay Tile, Talipao, Sulu, yesterday.

II Company of the 15th Infantry Battalion encountered at least 20 bandits while patrolling the area, Westmincom said.

The bandits withdrew leaving behind an M-16 rifle. With a report from Julie S. Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao; AP

'Business as usual' at Comelec with Borra as acting chair

By Beverly T. Mendoza

ITS "BUSINESS AS USUAL" AT the Commission on Elections following the unprecedented resignation of Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos, who officially turned over his post to Commissioner Resurreccion Borra yesterday.

Abalos will be saving chair and will serve out the remainder of Abalos' term. Abalos was due to retire in February 2008.

Abalos bade the employees goodbye after he submitted his formal resignation to the Commelec and endorsed his remaining workload to his fellow commissioners.

Arriving with his wife, Corazon, at the Comelec office in Manila yesterday, Abalos attended his last en banc meeting with the commissioners to wind up work-related matters.

Abalos said the Comelec was not expected to face any more problems, particularly on the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) elections on Dec. 29. He said the preparations had been made and would just be implemented.

"The Comelec goes on," spokesperson James Jimenez said.

Succession

Jimenez said the Comelec, through Resolution No. 7808, had provided for the rules of succession in the event of a vacancy. The succession en banc, he said, is set to designate Borra as the next chair as provided for by Resolution No. 7808.

For the coming barangay and SK elections, Jimenez said, the other commissioners are expected to take over Abalos' regional assignments.

Borra will take over the National Capital Region. Commissioners Florentino Tuason and Romeo Brawner relieved the assignment of Borra, saying the Comelec would make sure that it was prepared to continue its constitutionally mandated work with the coming October elections.

Despite Abalos' resignation, there are still five commissioners left so there can still be a quorum in the majority en banc, Brawner said.

Replacement

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita yesterday told reporters that President Macapagal-Arroyo was scouting for a new Comelec chair.

"Of course, you may be assured that the President's over-all intent is on a continuing search for good people to occupy the vacant posts in the Comelec," Ermita said.

"She knows many people who she may think she can name to occupy the two posts that are now vacant, perhaps, when the President comes back, while it's not being discussed, it's normal for her to be thinking about it during the next few days," he added. With a report from Norman Bordadora

No more Senate appearance for Abalos: See you in court

From page A1

on Thursday.

"After 52 hours of the same questions on the same subject, they will call me again? What more? Are hairsuits to be worn? Are ice sunsuits? (To drama) me again? What is this?" said Abalos.

"Let us not waste our time. I think it is too much already," he added.

Abalos announced that his lawyers were preparing a suit against former Socioeconomic Secretary Romulo Neri and businessman Jose "Joey" de Venecia III who had accused him of offering the National Broadband Network (NBN) project with China and offering bribes to carry out the $329-million deal.

"They are now preparing a jumbo suit. He named like 40 persons yesterday of all those people," Abalos said. He declined to elaborate but indicated there may be more people he planned to sue.

Abalos, 71, resigned as Comelec chair on Monday, two months before his scheduled retirement from the constitutional body to which he was appointed in 2002. He said he did not wish to distract the Comelec in its conduct of the Oct. 29 barangay elections.

His resignation came a week after Neri told the senators that Abalos offered him a P200-million bribe to endorse the NBN project.

Public Vice Gov. Ruben Ecleo in then filed an impeachment case against Abalos for culpable violation of the Constitution, betrayal of public trust and graft and corruption. With the resignation of Abalos, who was then already stepmothering, the impeachment case has become moot and relegated to the congressional archives.

Removing shield of immunity

By resigning, Abalos said he was doing his answers a favor because he was removing the "shield of immunity" accorded his office as a constitutional body and allowing himself to be sued in court.

"Now I will be facing charges by doing that," he said.

GOODBYE, BOSS: Employees of the Comelec, reluctant to lose resigned Chair Benjamin Abalos (left) may be the past six years, walk him after he attended his last en banc meeting with the commissioners at the main office in Intramuros.

"I prefer to face those charges before the proper forum, impeachment is neither an administrative nor criminal case. Therefore, it is equitable for me to disprove myself from politics. I want to dispel all of those rumors (that) I have influenced so many congressmen, that I have been pressured by Malacañang," Abalos said.

"Now, nobody can say that I have an office that I am taking advantage of," he said.

P18-million libel suits

Gabriel Villareal, Abalos' lawyer, said he was set to file two P18-million libel suits against Neri and De Venecia III this week. Another perjury case against Neri will be filed by Abalos for his statements in the Senate inquiry last week.

Villareal said Abalos would use the regular courts as his main forum to continue his "crusade" toward clearing his name and reputation.

Supplementary to the civil damage suits against Neri and De Venecia, he said, Abalos will also have a chance to clear his name on bribery cases that they heard will also be launched against Neri if Abalos chose to file a complaint with the Office of the Ombudsman.

Villareal said Abalos was ready to face any charges—serious, less serious, and even heavy—that would be launched against him, even the plunder raps that Bayan Muna said he would lodge.

"I admire him (Baptista) for the extent of his imagination but I would be quite interested to know how he can produce a plunder suit against Abalos with what he has at the moment," Villareal said.

Mike A: I never said 'Back off'

From page A1

(NBN) project and recounted how Arroyo supposedly tried to browbeat him into backing out of the project.

Dr. Wenicia said that at a meeting at the Pitch Black Golf and Country Club in Muntinlupa, Ms. Arroyo's husband pointed a finger inches from his face and told him: "Back off."

"Then can I point a finger and say 'back off' to someone I don't even know?," Arroyo said in a statement hung right after the hearing.

"Put yourself in my position. Can you tell someone off right away (at first time) you suggested and say 'back off, back off'? You do not say that."

He arrives, she leaves

Arroyo said his piece upon arriving from Hong Kong at 4:45 p.m., 21 days after leaving the country on his second foreign trip since his critical heart operation in April. He accompanied the President to the Apec summit last month.

Arroyo quietly left the country on Sept. 17 on the eve of the resignation Dr. Wenicia's explosive testimony on Monday morning, the topic on the "tapioca mass" who tried to intimidate him.

Dr. Wenicia's first, Amsterdam Holdings Inc., had contracted the NBN project, which was later awarded to telecommunications giant ZTE Corp. of China.

Bribery claims

The controversy happened into a full-blown scandal following Dr. Wenicia's claim that resigned Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. had offered him $130 million for AFI to stay away from the project, and an allegation by former Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri that Abalos had also offered him what he understood to be a P200-million bribe.

He arrived on board a Cathay Pacific flight at the Naia almost 12 hours after Ms. Arroyo flew out to China on the first leg of a two-nation Asian outing.

Speaking briefly about his trip, Arroyo said, "It was a successful, thank you very much ... I'm well rested now."

She will marry a close friend whether Arroyo spends all of the two weeks in Hong Kong or whether he took a forward flight from there to an undisclosed destination. Unconfirmed reports said he flew to Europe.

Only a reminder

Arroyo admitted meeting Dr. Wenicia at Pitch Black but said: "That's why it was a chance meeting, really at Pitch Black."

During the encounter—the first time they met, based on Arroyo's brief account—Mr. Arroyo's husband said he cautioned the Speaker's son about getting his hands on the project.

"What I told was a reminder to him. I reminded that he might be liable under the antigraft law because he's the son of the Speaker. He cannot deal with government contracts," said Arroyo, a lawyer.

Chance encounter

He did not elaborate on what else, if anything, transpired during the meeting and did not say when it happened.

Dr. Wenicia had also admitted meeting Dr. Wenicia at Pitch Black but told her words Senate hearing that it was a chance encounter.

Asked if he would file charges against Dr. Wenicia—as Abalos had—Arroyo replied: "I don't know. That's up to my lawyers."

Flanked by guards from the Presidential Security Group and airport officials, Arroyo immediately left the civil terminal via the exclusive Dignitaries Lounge, where the media were barred.

Spy vs spy: Nica revamp triggers demoralization

From page A1

latter to the Anti-Terrorism Council under the newly enacted Human Security Act of 2007.

The law mistake is reflected in a so-called "white paper," a document the chief of the Intelligence Agency (CIA) in regional offices, Intelligence informants said.

Resistance is said to be spreading even beyond the highly secretive agency as disgruntled employees quietly organize a reorganization that purportedly smashed prime positions to colleagues short on eligibility.

Interviews with Nica insiders and documents obtained by the Inquirer showed that a special committee created by Neophyte Neal's plantilla had appointed employees, including those whose qualifications were short of the criteria, to 100 new positions under the reorganization scheme.

'Exercise in favoritism'

Detailing salary upgrades, the appointments individuals' other more qualified and longer serving personnel, sources said. This has prompted employees to view the recently fill-ups as an exercise in favoritism.

"Most of those promoted were given their positions because they were relatives of those (in the appointment committee), while others are friends. And there's no transparency in the process," said a long-time Nica employee.

"That's why our jobs have to, we should make new habits and get members (of the committee) as coverage and strategy so we'd have better chances at getting promoted," the insider added.

Nica sources, who spoke to the Inquirer on condition that they will not be named, claimed the appointments and promotions lacked transparency and favored relatives and friends of the agency's top brass. The sources are employees of Nica, which Intel Boss Ibarra is talking to about the revamp.

"The appointments are questionable because they appointed personnel without mastered degrees when the positions clearly required a mastered degree," said one source.

2 Palace directives

Documents furnished the Inquirer showed that on Aug. 30, Nica Director General Cesar G. Garcia Jr. issued Agency Order No. 176 announcing the appointments, effective the next day, of 47 personnel to the positions of director, chief administrative officer, internal auditor, administrative officer and intelligence specialist.

Also on Aug. 30, Garcia issued Agency Order No. 177, effective the following day, naming 22 personnel to the positions of director, chief administrative officer and stationed in the intelligence specialist on "temporary status."

In his two memos, Garcia cited two Malacañang directives, namely Executive Order No. 80 dated Jan. 27, 2002, and Administrative Order No. 40 dated September 5, 2003, as basis for the reorganization at the Nica, which is under the administrative supervision of the National Security Council.

EO 80 provides for "the reorganization of the Nica ... in order to enhance its intelligence structure; reforms to enhance its analytic assessment and operational competencies, strengthen its capability for intelligence collection and allow the Agency to take the lead in intelligence management."

AO 40 also allows the Nica to "strengthen its role and authority" as the lead intelligence collection agency that reports directly to the Office of the President.

180 new plantilla items

To implement the reorganization, Garcia created the Special Committee on Career Development and Personnel Management early this year. On May 16, the chair of the special committee issued a set of criteria to be used in evaluating and recommending "deserving personnel for placement" to the 180 new plantilla items.

A "disposition form" issued by the special committee also set specific criteria, which included a mastered degree for those aspiring for positions ranging from intelligence specialist to director, the document said.

The process station, however, said at least two of those appointed to the position of chief administrative officer and one for the position of intelligence specialist did not have mastered degrees.

A number of those named for the same positions "on temporary status" were still working on their master's degrees, one source said.

Special committee

"Giving the employee a temporary appointment is a way of reserving that position. Why not give that position to those who already have master's degree?" another source said.

A ranking Nica officer who was bypassed over a five-page letter to Garcia questioning the selection process done by the special committee. The letter said members of the panel "should have been more encouraged by not participating and 'voting' in favor of a 'favorable' and biased fraud."

The special committee's secretariat also included a profile sheet based on the semi-annual performance appraisal, job knowledge and years of service, experience in intelligence, special training, emotional quotient and ability for social interaction.

The panel also noted that "personnel who garner highest points (in educational attainment) but with deficiencies will be given one year to complete the requirement. In the meantime, their appointment will be temporary until the deficiency is completed."

The special committee also warned that appointees definitive in the educational requirement will be returned to their former ranks, appointments and salaries.

President Macapagal-Arroyo's EO 80 cited the need for Nica "to be sufficiently responsive to the challenges of the new millennium" in light of unspecified "contemporary developments."

Aftermath of 9/11

Nica sources said this referred to upgrades in the world's intelligence community following the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks on the United States.

Inquirer sources said the appointment process had dampened morale among Nica employees in the Manila headquarters and in the regional offices.

"If you are not that famous among members of the committee and you're not close, you will not be recommended. Even if you are capable, that's what happens, you never get the chance to move up," said an employee in a Nica office north of Manila.

Whoever all of my colleagues have this same sentiment. It's like they no longer want to work because of what is happening," added the source, speaking in Filipino.

An employee decided at the headquarters said: "Our morale is really low. My colleagues lack enthusiasm in working but they are just forced to work because they have nowhere to go."

Meralco cuts rates by 65¢/kwh

By Abigail L. Ho

BUSINESS IN THE FEAR (Nine areas of the Manila Electric Co. will enjoy a 65-centavo per kilowatt-hour (kWh) reduction in their electricity bills this month due to the partial implementation of the mandated P0.70-centavo per-kWh Power Act Reduction (PAR) and the decline in generation rate.

Meralco president and chief operating officer Jesus Francisco said the franchised Power Corp. secondary with Meralco's electric income worth P433.2 million, representing cumulative PAR from Dec. 26, 2000, to July 25.

Section 31 of the 6136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (Epira), provides that residential end-user's shall get a rate reduction of 20 centavos per kWh for power sourced from Napocor to power distributors.

This particular rate reduction should be reflected in a separate line item on residential customers' monthly electricity bills.

Line item

But 30 months later, however, this line item has not been present in Meralco's billing statements.

The rate reduction in the Epira power billings will reach as much as 65 centavos per kWh as this includes the 54-centavos-per-kWh PAR-related reduction, the line-centavos-per-kWh generation rate related cut, and the corresponding 12-percent value-added tax reduction.

This means that residential customers consuming 100 kWh a month will see their bills go down by P65, while those using 200 kWh will pay P130less.

Following Meralco's scope of the credit terms, however, Francisco said it could now pass on a reduction of 64 centavos per kWh, with more PAR-related cuts to follow in the future.

The P420.3 million covered only seven months' worth of PAR, he said, so there should still be another three months' worth of discounts that Meralco could pass on to their customers.

This could amount to around 1.8 centavos per kWh for each of the three remaining months, he said.

He said the PAR should be reflected on bills every month.

"My hope story will save your in the residential rate reduction. Admittedly, especially now that we have against with the new industrial component. We hope this will push through," he said.

More cuts

Apart from the PAR-related cut, he said Meralco's residential consumers would also enjoy another four-centavos-per-kWh reduction as a result of the 20-percent dispatch of the distribution utility's independent power producers and the strategic penalty.

Average rate from the 8% were down to P4.06 per kWh in September from P4.27 per kWh in August, and the cost of power sourced from Napocor was also 21.4 centavos lower at P4.38 per kWh.

Although cost of power sourced from the wholesale electricity spot market was higher by P1.64 per kWh last month, its effect was not that big since Meralco sourced only 12 percent of its supply requirements from the electricity market.

The bulk of its supply, or 52 percent, came from 8% First Gas Power Corp.'s 1,000-kWh Sta. Rita and 500-kWh San Lorenzo and Quezon Power Philippines Ltd. The 36 percent balance came from Napocor.

Nora Aunor is off the book

ALMOST

LOS ANGELES—HELD LIABLE against Filipino superstar Nora Aunor (aka Nora Villamayor) was declared law on Monday and the case against her has been closed, according to lawyers Claire Topkis and Terrence Goldberg of the law offices of Goldberg and Topkis.

"The case is closed but Aunor has successfully complied with all terms and conditi ons under the bond and has performed out, effectively during the Drug Diversion Program. Thus, the arrest of Aunor shall be deemed to have never occurred and she shall be considered not to have been arrested in the first place, leaving her with no criminal record of the incident, all pursuant to Section 1000.4 of the California Penal Code," said the press statement of Goldberg and Topkis.

Aunor, 51, was arrested in 2005 after security screeners at Los Angeles International Airport said they found eight grams of methamphetamine (shabu in the Philippines) in a film container in her carry-on bag.

She pleaded guilty to drug possession, but escaped jail after agreeing to enter a drug rehabilitation program. Circuit enjoyment Judge Lance Ito signed an order that was accepted into Drug Court on Dec. 22, 2005. The court emphasizes immediate error for defendants.

Nor Aunor left the drug rehab program in April 2006, after failing as much as agreement with another judge over her request to be allowed to travel outside of Los Angeles.

Her attorneys, Goldberg and Topkis, decided to enroll Aunor in an 18-month drug diversion program, which allowed her to leave her filming and concert schedules for 2006.

In an earlier story published in the business, Aunor's lawyers explained the difference between Drug Court and the diversion program: "Drug Court required no plea to be made while undergoing the program, while diversion does, plus, Drug Court has regular random drug testing and diversion does not."

—Janet Stucin R. Majedec

'Ineng' hovers over RP Sea

Fishers tell of shark attack

TROPICAL DEPRESSION "INENG" intensified into a storm even as it remained nearly stationary over the Philippine Sea east of northern Luzon early yesterday.

Ineng spawned monsoon rains over the western sections of the country, including Metro Manila, for two days in a row. Tuesday, according to the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pag-asa).

It was forecast to bring light to moderate rain in Baguio and Angeles cities in northern Luzon, Metro Manila and Tagaytay in southern Luzon, and Tacloban, Cebu and Bacolod cities in the Visayas until this morning.

"While the storm is there, we still consider us to experience monsoon rain," said weather forecaster Nikki Rodriguez.

While it was not forecast to hit land, Pagasa said Ineng would enhance the southwest monsoon and bring rain over the western sections of the country.

The rains of the southwest monsoon is classified by Pagasa would affect the southern tip of Luzon and Western Visayas, the weather bureau said.

—TJ Burgonio

CAMP ROBERTS, CAL. (AUGUST—FOUR) crewmen were members of a cargo ship which sank off the coast of Guatemala, Honduras, on Saturday marooned helplessly as shark crewmembers were eaten alive by sharks, even as their screams echoed in the ship, a police official said yesterday.

Senior Supt. Benito Pelin, Palawan police director, said the four are still in shock after seeing their colleagues being "mangled by sharks" and are now confined at the Gen. Dionisio Hospital.

"They said they could hear the crew members crying out. They saw them being eaten by sharks, but they could not do anything," Pelin said over the phone.

Based on the accounts of the survivors, Pelin said the 114 missing crew members of the ship could already be dead while swimming that search and rescue operations would continue.

The MV sank in the Sulu Sea east of Coronadillo, Palawan, on Saturday amid rough waves, sources say passing nearby are in Hanna, said Coast Guard spokesperson Lt. Armand Balilo.

"Word reached the Coast Guard after a fishing boat rescued four other crewmen on Monday.

Rescue vessels have already been dispatched to the scene to locate four more crewmembers still in the water, Balilo said.

But the location has remained during transporting search efforts, he said.

The 410-ton MV, registered to the JPS Shipping Lines, was carrying cement from Cebu to Brooke's Point in Palawan when it ran into rough seas and big waves caused by the tropical depression.

Four of the ship's crew identified as dead were Rodelyn Espiritu, Rey Cabahug, Madel Tiguman and Gilbert Abregan were warned by passing fishing boat Gilbert.

Pelin said the investigation is now focused on the possibility that the sunken cargo ship was overloaded. He said the ship left San Fernando, Cebu, on Sept. 30 loaded with 600 metric tons of cement. The ship was registered to owner in Brooke's Point Palawan since Marites Barcena, Angelo Bradora Gomez, and Marquias C. Ortiz

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Solon says cheap meds bill still favors multinationals

By Christine V Esguerra

THE GOOD NEWS IS THE HOUSE OF Representatives may finally pass the long-awaited drugstore bill before it goes on a three-week break beginning Oct. 12.

The bad news, in the words of one of the bill's authors, is the measure could end up still benefiting the giant multinational pharmaceutical companies instead of ailing Filipinos who desperately need a break from high medicine prices.

Bohol Rep. Dolpiel Biron described the bill prepared by the House committee on trade's technical working group as a "compromise."

The bill is a consolidation of 34 measures, including Biron's House Bill No. 1, all aimed at drastically lowering drug prices in the country.

"It's a version the multinationals will be able to tolerate," Biron told the Inquirer in an interview, citing the provision that allows the parallel importation of patented drugs.

"They'll not be hurt at the end of the day because it's still their products that will be sourced by the Filipino consumer," he said.

The bill would allow the importation of patented drugs—which are sold abroad by the same companies operating in the Philippines—for a much lower price.

"[The multinationals'] revenue will just be transferred from one pocket to another," he said.

Speaker Jose de Venecia announced yesterday the cheaper medicines bill, which failed to pass during the last Congress, would be passed next week, along with the proposed P1.227-trillion national budget for 2008.

Biron had insisted on including a provision in the bill regulating drug prices. Critics of the provision said this went against free market principles.

The closed-door committee got to approving such a provision was the creation of an "intervening price regulation board."

The board has one year to formulate an "operational plan" to regulate drug prices. It would require congressional approval for the plan.

But, "It's a loose provision," Biron said.

The Senate, meanwhile, passed on second reading yesterday its version of the cheaper medicines bill.

The measure, entitled, "An Act to Provide for Quality Affordable Medicines," was a consolidation of the bills filed by Senate President Manny Villar and Senators Manuel Roxas, Antonio Trillanes IV, Pia Cayetano, Juan Miguel Zubiri, Loren Legarda, Lito Lapid and Jinggoy Estrada. With Doma Z. Pantaleon

Eid'l Fitr declared a holiday

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo has declared Oct. 12 a regular nonworking holiday to celebrate Eid'l Fitr.

Eid'l Fitr marks the end of Ramadan, the 40-day Muslim feast of prayer and fasting.

Proclamation No. 1359 declares Friday, Oct. 12, 2007, a regular holiday throughout the country to observe Eid'l Fitr," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye in a statement.

"It is hereby ordained that the Muslim holiday is subject to the sighting of the new moon," he said. Marvin Bordadora

Scorpions, spiders on a plane from HK

[illegible] arrived [illegible] on a Plane," read the [illegible] box was [illegible] and spiders.

Kept in cans and transparent plastic boxes, some 300 scorpions and spiders believed to be centipedes were found inside a package at the Central Mail Exchange Center (CMEC) of the Bureau of Customs' district office at the airport on Monday afternoon.

Some six passenger through a Cathay Pacific flight from Hong Kong, the poisonous insects were found during a routine pre-release check at the CMEC on Monday, when a broker claimed the package.

Nelson Irlan, acting port collector at the CMEC, said the package was "misdeclared" to be containing tea pieces of clothing.

"It was misdeclared because what was written on the dispatch was 'personal clothing.' That's why the examiner was surprised when it was opened," Irlan said.

"The scorpions almost bit the examiner," he said.

The insects were found in separate plastic containers with board holes to allow breathing, while some were placed in bottles. They were then placed in a styrofoam box and then covered in the cardboard box, containing similar boxes of worn-out clothing, Irlan said.

The shipment stated that it was the first time for CMEC examiners to encounter sealed poisonous insects. He wouldn't hazard a guess why the scorpions and spiders were flown to Manila.

Sheryl Quiaoncomin

I respect the Filipino.
With brother Filipinos we will restore Moral Values amid National Discipline.
– FPRRR –

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HISTORIC WALK / South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun and his wife get down from their vehicle and walk toward the border between the two Koreas on Tuesday to start a summit aimed at ending 58 years of animosity between them. AFP PHOTO

ROK leader, wife wear North Korean watches

SEOUL—REPUBLIC OF KOREA PRESIDENT Roh Moo-hyun and his wife sported watches made in North Korea for their trip to Pyongyang to a gesture of reconciliation for the second-ever summit of the divided Korea.

The time pieces—produced at an industrial complex in North Korea's border city of Kaesong—are seen as a symbol of Roh's intention to expand inter-Korean economic cooperation and eventually build an economic community between the two countries.

"It is a symbol of inter-Korean economic cooperation and appears to demonstrate the will for common prosperity" of the two Koreas, Kim Jung-sup, deputy presidential spokesperson, told reporters.

Roh, who joined First Lady Kwon Yang-sook in wearing one of the watches, also brought nine more of them as gifts for North Korean leader Kim Jong Il and other officials, said Kim.

The sprawling Kaesong complex, jointly run by the rival Koreas, combines South Korean technology and management expertise with cheap North Korean labor. Currently, 15 South Korean companies operate factories there, employing about 10,000 North Korean workers, making watches, sneakers, clothing and other cheap consumer goods.

The price tag of the watch is 150,000 won ($1177), more than three times the average monthly wage of the North Korean workers at Kaesong.

It was unclear how Kim, known for luxurious tastes in food and drink, would react to the relatively inexpensive gifts. Kim has possessed top military officials in his country with expensive Swiss-made Rolex watches in total loyalty to his regime, according to North Korean defectors in South Korea.

SECOND SUMMIT Kim Jong-il (right) and his No. 2 man Kim Yong-nam greet South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun at welcoming rites in Pyongyang, the North Korean capital. AFP PHOTO

Mercedes Benz S600

Roh rode in a Mercedes-Benz S600 Guard-armored vehicle as he traveled in the North for the summit.

South Korea also has a bulletproof BMW 760Li sedan and Hyundai Motor's sedan for the President's official use, according to South Korean media.

Roh's office did not say why it chose the S600 Guard, which Fortune a high level of protection against firearms, grenade shrapnel and other explosive devices as well as tires that can still work even if punctured.

South Korea already has set up a stone monument to commemorate where its president crossed the frontier on foot to head to a summit with the North Korean leader.

Roh briefly walked across the Military Demarcation Line, inside the 4-km wide Demilitarized Zone separating the two Koreas, on Tuesday before getting back in his car to head toward Pyongyang for the meeting with Kim.

The inscription on the monument—which was handwritten by Roh and carved into the stone—marks the first ever crossing of the frontier on foot by a South Korean president, according to Roh's office.

The inscription reads: "The road to peace and prosperity."

Human rights protest

A German activist calling attention to human rights issues in North Korea was forcefully ejected from a press center in a hotel where dreds of South Korean and f journalists were covering the mit.

Norbert Vollertsen, a physicia former aid worker who spen months in North Korea, called sit dozens human rights during his vi with Kim.

The South has long been accus human rights groups of shoring a eyes. Between 150,000 and 20 people are believed to be held in camps for political reasons, ha North democrats.

It remains unclear whether Rol raise the human rights issue with

Vollertsen made a shocking p protest in Seoul in 2005 during a conference by US Secretary of Condoleezza Rice.

Heads of 2 Koreas meet for historic

Reuters/AFP

weaved red and pink paper flowers.

Earlier, during the 100-km journey by road from Seoul, Roh stopped out of his vehicle to walk across the border that divided the Koreas in the center of the heavily fortified Demilitarized Zone—the first time any the team leader has crossed the land boundary.

In the first summit between the two in 2000, the South's Kim flew to Pyongyang.

'Wall will fall'

"This line is a wall that has divided the nation for a half century. Our people have suffered from too many hardships and development has been held up due to this wall," Roh said before crossing.

"This line will be gradually erased and the wall will fall," he said. "I will make efforts to make my walk across the border an occasion to remove the forbidden wall and move toward peace and prosperity."

This week's summit, which runs through Thursday, comes a year after the North conducted its first test detonation of a nuclear bomb.

The explosion catalyzed world opposition to the regime but soon led to a reversal of Washington's

PSALM
Power Sector Assets & Liabilities Management Corporation

INVITATION TO BID

Pre-Equipment, Components, Architecture, and Architecture of the Mariveles Coal-Fired Power Plant and the Mariveles Coal Terminal Located at Sitio Biaan, Mariveles, Bataan

(Re: Item C.)

The Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation (PSALM) Privatization Bids and Awards Committee (PBAC) cordially invites all interested and eligible bidders to participate in the procurement of the following:

Pre-Equipment, Components, Architecture, and Architecture of the Mariveles Coal-Fired Power Plant and the Mariveles Coal Terminal Located at Sitio Biaan, Mariveles, Bataan

(Re: Item C.) The bidder's bid security shall be valid for Sixty (60) calendar days from the date of the opening of bids.

Interested bidders may obtain further information from PSALM's Office and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday to Friday.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of One Hundred (Peso 1) Thousand Pesos (P100,000.00) in the form of cash. The Bidding Documents shall be downloaded electronically by the prospective bidder or his authorized representative.

The Venue of Bids is at the PSALM Office, 5th Floor, Executive Center, Makati Stock Exchange Building, 6767 Ayala Avenue, Makati City, the 27th floor of Citadel C Condo-o-Rama Building, 107 L.P. Leviste Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City, or before 10:00 AM on October 15, 2007.

All qualified bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

PSALM reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For more information, please refer to:

Office of the PSALM Bids and Awards Committee
Attn: Ms. Corazon P. Villaruz
Contact Person: COR ELIZONDO P. VILLANUEVA PM
Tel. Nos. (632) 840-1051 / (632) 840-1052
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(Sgd.) ARMANDO M. MENAR JR.
CAPT PN (SEC)
Chairman, PBAC

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
OFFICE OF THE PHILIPPINE NAVY BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
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1. The Armed Forces of the Philippines, through the Mobility Special Projects CY 2007, intends to apply the sum as stated below being this Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the following Philippine Navy Project. Bids received in excess of this ABC shall be automatically rejected at the Opening.

Item/Description/Activity	Approved Budget for the Contract	Other Data: Pre-Bid Conference	Deadline for Submission/ Opening of Bids	Price of Bid Documents (non-refundable)
Lot 3 Supply, Delivery and Installation of Fuel, Oil and Lubricants (POL) and Basic Electronic Devices (BED) Items (Class No. 11-000)	Php 2,000,000.00	October 4, 2007, 9:00 AM	October 15, 2007 9:00 AM	Php 1,000.00

2. The Armed Forces of the Philippines now invites Eligible Bidders for the Supply and Delivery of Various Supplies and Materials for PNC. Delivery of the goods being procured and description in an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II and Section III of the Bidding Documents (BD).

3. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from PN BAC and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday to Friday.

4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of (Mentioned in Para 1) This method of payment will be in the form of cash. The Bidding Documents shall be downloaded electronically by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

5. The Armed Forces of the Philippines will hold a Pre-Bid Conference (can, or as inaccurate) person at Office of the PN Bids and Awards Committee, Bonifacio Naval Station, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

6. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before October 15, 2007, 9:00 A.M. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the form of Surety Bond, or Manager's Check. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

7. Bid opening shall be on October 15, 2007, 9:00 AM at Office of the PN Bids and Awards Committee, Bonifacio Naval Station, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

8. The Armed Forces of the Philippines reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Office of the PN Bids and Awards Committee
Attn: Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
Contact Person: COR ELIZONDO P. VILLANUEVA PM
Tel. Nos. (632) 840-1051 / (632) 840-1052
Fax No. (632) 840-1053

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SURPRISE: He was more or less expected but not quite, as that when Kim Jong-il actually shows up to welcome his counterpart from the south of the divided peninsula. The summit gets off to a rousing start.

THEY'VE COME A LONG WAY: North and South Korea were proclaimed separate states in 1948, three years after the peninsula was divided between the US and Soviet zones of influence during the so-called Cold War.

summit

...rolling policy on the North.

...veeding in the manured

...Roh appeared to revel in the mo...ent, waving and smiling broadly ...ane swimming a goose-stepping ...orth Korean military honor guard ...mbling titles with hyperstress.

...Roh has billed his first stay as the ...ominated South as a chance to enc... intimacy born with the publication of ...e Korean peninsula at the end of ...D/WWII.

...ilan Roh's critics say the visit is ...much more at domestic politics and ...pect the South Korean leader to ...more around the sensitive issues of ...clear weapons and most human...ghts abuses.

...North Koreans dressed in their ...best cheered on one wheel Kim or ...ved at a main square in Py...ngyang, repeating the greeting ...almost later as Roh stepped out of ...n open car supplied by North Ko...a.

...A portly Kim, in his trademark ...mpsuit and security platform ...oes that made him appear taller ...an the dark-suited Roh, shook ...ands unceremonially with the South ...orean leader and his wife.

...Hundreds of thousands lined the ...oads, waving bunches of plastic ...owers and shouting "hurrah" and ...ourah" the fatherland.

...Roh has not given any specifics ...bout what he will propose during ...is visit, or get in return, prompting ...ome hundreds of thousands [illegible] ...ow that the summit is an ego trip ...f Roh seeking to establish a legacy ...r his unpopular administration ...s ends in February.

...While the Roh contingent was seen as ...ore warm than last on an eco...omy of optimism, the latest meeting ...as seen a far more muted response, ...ue to a vague agenda and doubts ...at Roh will be able to achieve ...nything.

...With just five months left in office, ...oh has until he would see the sum...it in person for peace and an eventu...l ...unification on the peninsula where ...ore 2 million troops face off, most ...f them near the border.

...ace settlement

...In July, Pyongyang shut down its ...ly operating nuclear reactor that ...produced material for bombs and ...the country has extensively agreed to ...disable its atomic facilities by year-...end in a way that they cannot be eas...ily restarted.

Before leaving the South Korean capital, Roh acknowledged that the two Koreas alone could not readily resolve the nuclear standoff or bring peace to the peninsula.

The North is involved in interna...tional talks on its nuclear weapons program including the United States and other regional powers, a peace mechanism to the Korean War would require the participation of the United States and China that also fought in that conflict.

Aid pledge

"Even if we do not reach an agree...ment on summit arena, it would still be a meaningful achievement to narrow the gap in understanding and to enhance confidence in each other," Roh said of the meeting with Kim.

Analysts say South Korea may pledge billions of dollars to help raise its cash-strapped neighbor's ru...ined economy.

Upon entering Pyongyang, Roh reminisced in an open-top car and was greeted by the North's No. 2 leader, Kim Yong-nam. Both rode for some 20 minutes through the bleakly showcase capital, waving to hundreds of thousands of residents.

Roh checked in at the bleakly state guest house and had a meal with his wife and a few friends for lunch, officials. He also watched video footage of his arrival in Pyongyang, according to pool reports from the North.

Roh held talks with Kim Yong-nam [illegible] Tuesday. Immediately ...TN reported from Pyongyang, ahead of an official dinner where it was unclear if Kim Jong-il would attend. Formal talks between the two leaders begin Wednesday.

Unification dreams

Surveys show South Koreans favor the summit and eventual unification, but want the process to be gradual, fearing that the cost of absorbing the impoverished north would wreck their own economy, Asia's fourth largest. - Agence France-Presse and Reuters

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

The battle resumes

EDITORIAL

THE WATERGATE AFFAIR, AS JOURNALISTS BOB Woodward and Carl Bernstein famously wrote, hinged on the advice, "Follow the money." The political demise of US President Richard Nixon, to whom the money trail of payoffs to silence witnesses and smear the opposition led, was encapsulated in a famous question asked in the US Congress. Fared by obvious foot-dragging (at best) and hostile invocations of executive privilege (at worst), Sen. Howard Baker relentlessly asked, during the Watergate hearings, "What did the president know and when did he know it?"

We have repeated that line, time and again, in this space. And all of Philippine media have tried to follow the money trail as it is being exposed both inside and outside the halls of Congress. Along the way, witnesses have come forward, with damning testimony, as well as an equally damning, but steadily unraveling, tangle of damning motivations and agendas, both hidden and on public display.

At the forefront of the whole drama has been the Senate, acting with a mixture of inquisitorial zeal and the most shameless—and shameful—misuse of slipshod procedures and lust for publicity. Waiting anxiously in the wings has been the House of Representatives, itself divided between partisans of President Maranguad Arroyo and those supporting Speaker Jose de Venecia. Formerly at odds with each other, the Senate and the House are more aligned today in a common confrontation with the President.

The resignation of Benjamin Abalos as chair of the Commission on Elections has deprived the House of its chance to assert a long overdue independence from the President and her family. It is now common knowledge that even as First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo departed on a trip abroad, his sons and brother corralled congressmen in what they hoped would be the first step in toppling the Speaker. That gamble failed, but so did the Speaker's preparations to strike at Abalos by means of an impeachment. We can only infer, at this point, that the House will, for the first time during the incumbency of Ms Arroyo, wield the power of the purse by means of going through the proposed national budget with a fine-toothed comb.

This returns us to the Senate, which is due to resume its joint committee hearings on the ZTE deal. There will be two issues immediately confronting the chamber. First, allegations concerning the conduct of the executive session last Thursday. This was meant to allow senators the opportunity to understand why Chair Romulo Neri of the Commission on Higher Education invoked executive privilege just as he had tantalizingly come close to revealing that the President had said more about Abalos' bribe than just advising Neri not to accept the bribe.

Conflicting suggestions of improper behavior, either by senators or members of the Cabinet, in that executive session, have been made. One senator has asked whether those suggestions of improper, even scandalous, conduct justified the unprecedented move of some senators to reveal what took place. We say unprecedented, because the allegations of what happened during that executive session are unparalleled in the history of our Congress and perhaps any legislature in the modern era.

The second issue is whether or not to compel Neri to reveal what he knows, but won't say. Senators must decide if they will detain Neri and litigate, or not, a case in the Supreme Court to settle, once and for all, whether the Cabinet member has the right to invoking executive privilege. This is a confrontation that seems not only inevitable, but necessary. We cannot agree with Sen. Joker Arroyo that the Senate should quit while it is ahead.

It is by settling these two questions, which all hinge on Neri's possessing information as to what the President knew, and when—and what she did or did not do, knowing what she knew—that checks and balances are asserted and the parameters of democracy are more clearly established. At stake is the ability of Congress to exercise oversight, of witnesses to use legitimate legal shields or hide behind legal barriers erected to cover up official wrongdoing. There is even the possibility that Neri's value as a witness has been compromised, because he no longer has free will, and has been subjected to official intimidation—whether from the Senate, or the executive branch.

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With Abalos down, GMA is next

EARLY MONDAY MORNING, COMELEC Chair Benjamin Abalos was still in fighting form, saying over the radio that he would not resign, that he would fight the impeachment case against him. Before noon, however, he announced in a hastily called press conference that he was resigning. What happened? Why the sudden turnaround?

The official version is that members of the Abalos family, including the grandchildren, had a wee council and decided that their patriarch should resign to spare the family the ordeal of an impeachment trial. The Comelec chairmanship was not worth all the aggravation. Anyway, he is due to retire this February with four months' extra.

That's fantasy. But the real reason is probably that they did a head count in the House of Representatives and found out that the impeachment complaint would be able to get the 98 votes needed to send it to the Senate. And in the Senate trial, Abalos would be subjected to stages, broadcast live on television, and reported in the newspapers. And even if there was not enough evidence to convict him, the opposition-dominated Senate would still declare him guilty. After all it's supposedly more vital, unlike in a court trial, it is not the evidence that determines the verdict but the biases of the senators. So why fight when you already know you would be refused anyway, no matter what you present?

Also, Malacañang may have told Abalos enough is over the President. Like they say, poor Abalos may have been made a sacrificial lamb to satisfy the blood lust of the senators and the people in the wild, wild, public square. But a pinky has never injured or weakened, they pong up on it with some frenzy in the civilized world, that's also what they do. They have retired blood and they will not stop until somebody falls. Malacañang probably thought that after Abalos went, the bloodlust would die down.

I don't think so. Now that Abalos is down, the opposition will turn its attention on GMA. One down, one to go. The real target is not really Abalos but GMA, the big fish. Now it will

Neal H. Cruz

AS I SEE IT

go after her with hammer and tongs.

* * *

I feel very sad at the same time proud of the Abalos family. It is a good, close-knit family. I know some of them. Mrs. Abalos is the oldest of three beautiful sisters; the two younger ones, both widows, are my godchildren. They have children and grandchildren any parent can be proud of. They don't deserve what is being done to their patriarch.

I hope that they can rest and relax now and that the hurting heaven will close completely other. I also hope that some day he is invited to government. Abalos and Secretary Romulo Neri will tell the Senate everything that they know about the ZTE deal and not protect anybody. Justice and good government dictate that the bad guys should be punished and the good guys be rewarded.

As in war, retreat is the best thing to do when you are losing a battle. In resigning, Abalos avoided being impeached. If he would be impeached, he would forfeit his case, he would have less money to support his family, he would forfeit his retirement pay (as already right to vote and to hold public office. By resigning, he salvaged all of those.

Abalos is a good man. I wish him the best.

* * *

Supreme deserve rants to go up again with the rise in oil prices. And expect Supreme and Meralco to blame each other again for the increase. The Petron boss pointed to make comparisons with Shell and Caltex's case, but maybe Meralco are doing to compare to keeping blame on each other. The Petron has not done what it was supposed to do. Power rates are going up, not down. So there is a move in Congress to amend it. Supreme mess is

Conrado de Quiros

THERE'S THE RUB

and after meeting with Estrin's father in Shangri-La the idea has a habit of bumping into the wrong people at the wrong time, which is really the line the right people at the right time). After the Iraqi chair reported him to his boss or offering him a couple of hundred million pesos as though it were his to give? The same prince Lim and De Villa were suppose to appoint suppose-to, honest and credible officials.

Incidentally, the Ayala-led group dropping remark by Jo Villa: "With his resignation, we can now proceed to conduct clean and credible elections." That's unclear as administer or say that it was impossible to have that while Abalos was there. But the Comelec would normally make the Comelec better, or at least not worse, if one of the Abalos' family members will be two members in the Comelec only now you which should give Malacañang the chance to appoint officials who are "competent, with proven and credibility." Otherwise Jo Villa says, "Abalos' resignation will not improve the Comelec from doing its job," and with his resignation, we can now proceed to conduct "clean and credible elections."

Well, who is God's name appointed Abalos, and credited him often for bad? Arroyo, setting it or unwittingly, declarative deal noting the suppose's birthed of peace, chief of them awarding the compensation of succeeding to a simple my man was me fit to run; allow he had administrative mess Miguel Cabili's actions of this kind or the capture of Rapidex Pharmaceutical by making six-winning the national Magnificians were

Saving the Queen

FRANKLY, I CANNOT UNDERSTAND THE RE-action of people to the resignation of Benjamin Abalos.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines says, "Thank God. BC thanks responded to our prayers," and his example "should be followed by other public officials." Of course, I completely agree that other officials as well as the whole country would be glad to resign, glad of them for his. I cooperate in the country whose name is associated with the pro-Senate hearings involving international profits, the ZTE scandal and the reopening of the "Hello, Garci" tape based on Atty. Heber Dimaya's statements and that's Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. But before Abalos resigned, he also cried—"In the committed and unassailable sentiments of the former Hello Garci"—to buy him off with P200 million.

I cannot for the life of me understand how any subsequent action Abalos might have taken in light of that, or go on to see him up for reinstatement. The point is not for him to resign, the point is for us to prosecute him, and where found guilty—as he should—jail him.

And why on earth would anybody imagine this Abalos' departure from the Comelec would normally make the Comelec better, or at a couple of people put it, give it a chance to reform? Abalos' exit of the former Hello Garci members will be two members in the Comelec only now you which should give Malacañang the chance to appoint officials who are "competent, with proven and credibility." Otherwise Jo Villa says, Abalos' resignation will not improve the Comelec from doing its job," and with his resignation, we can now proceed to conduct "clean and credible elections."

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for the strangest reasons, to Alt Alice-in-Wonderland caution, that gone to be picked as "positive thinking." Positive, my foot. You do not exercise the means of creative force positive when you are in the light of fourth events. Abalos' exit of the former Hello Garci members will be two members in the Comelec only now you which should give Malacañang the chance to appoint officials who are "competent, with proven and credibility." Otherwise Jo Villa says, Abalos' resignation will not improve the Comelec from doing its job," and with his resignation, we can now proceed to conduct "clean and credible elections."

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Life is cheap in Burma

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE CONDEMNATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL community of the brutal slaughter of Buddhist monks and pro-democracy demonstrators by the military dictatorship in Myanmar with sound and fury but has not softened the mailed fist of the ruling junta.

More than a full month, rebel-led mass protests of monks in Myanmar's two main cities, Yangon, founded up full their monasteries and held to an unusual civic course and a political critique, ignored. Brute military suppression in Rangoon began. The dictatorship will let no one in private of the monks' protest of the country.

The junta admits that 31 people were killed when troops and blockaded their demonstrations around Rangoon two weeks ago, but diplomats estimate that other the massacre, the protests have subsided amid heavy military presence in the streets.

Burmese diplomats at the United Nations General Assembly said yesterday had returned to the streets after the security forces had executed "normal force," while diplomats in Bangkok said hidden fighter groups from the church led could not been forbidden.

The price of life in Burma is cheap. According to an unconfirmed report from Rangoon, the army paid 30,000 kyats (about $22 or 3671) in compensation to families of men shot in last week's carnage before confiscating the corpses.

In a country where 50 percent of the population of 50 million are Buddhists, there are 400,000 monks, including novices, and there are as many soldiers. The monks represent the strongest countervailing institution to the military dictatorship. They have avoided the fate of the monks in Tibet, brutally crushed and co-opted by the Chinese Communist Party, because they are not united. Their influence among the impoverished Burmese people, living in abject poverty in many contrast to their wealthy and high-living generals, helps explain why they are the main target of the crackdown and it makes sense to the junta to disperse them to restrain outside the capital.

Intervention by the United Nations, the European Union, the major Western democracies, mainly the United States and Britain, not to mention the leaders of Southeast Asian nations, have failed to induce Burma's intransigent rulers to arrange the junta to come to a reconciliation with the pro-democracy forces before losing face for it.

The UN special envoy, Ibrahim Gambari arrived in Singapore from Singapore late yesterday with an urgent mission from the Security Council, to establish a dialogue between Than Shwe and the generals that might result in a political compromise. He has been working his hands for an opening to the junta's leaders, but Than Shwe, after being allowed to seek face by, who is being held in a villa near the government guest house, Gambari has so far met only civilian Cabinet ministers.

The long wait if Gambari has been interpreted as a signal economic inside the junta into the crackdown. The members of the junta are believed to have failed to agree on a collective response to the unprecedented mass protests. This has encouraged hard-liners around the dictator Than Shwe to push the junta toward precipitous action against the hard line are led by Than Shwe, and here the junta is urged not with finesse.

The international pressure on Burma is not letting, despite the the angry rhetoric, because the main trading partners of Burma, who would not have to up on the junta to open up the political system by participation by the opposition National League for Democracy party, have currencies in economics relations. The price was the 1990 pro-democracy elections by is available, but it was not allowed to take power, and many of its leaders were jailed, including Suu Kyi who has spent 12 of the last 18 years under house arrest.

The strongest countermeasures came from the United States and Britain. All Presidents George W. Bush announced new sanctions, including a ban on visas and a freeze of the assets of 14 Burmese officials. British Prime Minister Gordon Brown said, "I want to see all the governors of the workings on this regime now—sanctions, the promise of the UN, pressure from China and all the countries in the region, India, pressure from the whole world."

The junta has diabolically brushed aside all these angry words. Khin Nyunt, the "Secretary One" of Senior General Senior, has investments in Burma, and in 2003 it banned most Burmese imports and transactions. Britain no longer has any large-scale investments in Burma. European Union sanctions have been in force for years, where the EU banned arms sales and expelled military attachés and a host the assets of some members of the junta. It arc whose professional trade unions with Burma, but these sanctions have failed to isolate or hurt Burma economically.

The United States initiated it has a weak leverage to influence the junta, and this is the reason Bush called on "all nations that have influence with the regime to join us in sending a clear message to the Burmese people and to tell the Burmese junta to cease using force on its own people." These include China, India and Japan, all of which have substantial investments in Burma and leverage for investment in the island all about gas resources.

China, which needs Burma's fuel resources for its rapidly developing economy and energy hungry industries, managed a weak protest by saying it "respected the efforts of the United Nations" and "hoped that all parties will peacefully handle the current issue."

Burma has become the United States in the ostensible among Asian powers for access to its resources. The junta is playing the card to the hilt to keep power and to suppress the democracy movement in Burma. The position of Aung, of which Burma is a member, on the crackdown is the most interesting. The hypocrisy of these will be examined to be in our column.

A window of opportunity

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

NOW THAT CHAIR SHARON ARAUZA HAS finally regained from the London, he seems ready to step up the pressure on the remaining half-dozen, including, because hope springs eternal, the supporting power, to create a "new and reformed" Comelec.

Arauza has somehow resisted by Alston, and many commentators writing in the next few months, President Macapagal-Arroyo and her acolytes have the chance to appoint a whole new board of commissioners (or at least a majority) who can begin a truly clean-up of the poll body, and put in a new pattern poll body by adopting the necessary reforms in our election system.

The most pressing of these reforms is computerization of the voting and the counting system, which would be able to wipe out all forms of fraud in counting. There are the "hands" (and duplicitous) among Comelec officials and employees, and employees that will run the automated election system

Evil prevails too often in RP

[text not legible] Thus the book's observation that "The ritual is necessary for the triumph of evil in our good nature to nothing" is a daily indictment against us Filipinos. In the struggle between good and evil, it seems that more than make rules prefer to be good souls or clearly outmaneuver those who are evil, yet many who are evil seem to prevail far too often, because good men and women who know what to do decline to do what they ought to. The words from scripture apply always, do. "Woe unto them who know the good but ought to do and doesn't do it. (Luke 12:47)

The incidence of corruption, scandals and irregularities by supposedly individuals in government most conspicuous in this such [illegible] Greatest good, the greatest harm done when certain scandalous deeds by [illegible] wrecking city [illegible] are nothing to do nothing, they are nothing good done. Silence is a clear indication determine the outcome, but whether those who claim to be good men and women are willing to stand up and fight for what they know to be right. Evil, sin and sinful men must be opposed. God [illegible] Spiritual lying and other crimes offered itself. I can understand their frustrations, but in need of walking out or refraining from taking questions, I suspected them to lower me the work. And they would have the truth, evil will triumph. Preacher Wayne Grissom said, "When good men and women do nothing, evil triumphs."

—RUTH ROMUALDO, LICOS, executive secretary, Jose Evangelical Church, chair, anti-piracy committee, Convention Baptist Ministers Association (CBMA)

Heartwarming, cool, appealing

LETTERS

I FIND THE INQUIRER'S FRONT page design very interesting and innovative. I have never seen such a very heartwarming and cool concept in a newspaper (maybe because I only read the business).

I found the photo in the Aug. 16, 2007 issue of children playing in the rain very appealing. My heart melted seeing that photo. My congratulations to the photographer.

To me the Inquirer is the No. 1 newspaper in the country. Continue to be the best.

—JERRY ROCADENA, jerrocks@yahoo.com

'Igorota' shouldn't be used for potatoes

THE HYPHEN TO THE ARTICLE on the Philippines' new potato varieties, the "Ifuta (Ifugao) vs. Benguet" (Business, 9/22/07).

Even though I am a true Manileña, I find myself getting against the reported use of "Igorota" as the official name for one of their potatoes.

Ifugao and Benguet are two provinces in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) and not in Ilocos, Cagayan Valley or Central Luzon. Thus, the use of "Igorota" as the official name for one of their potatoes is misleading.

—ELIVE BACAR, gorota@yahoo.com.ph

Ahueva's interest in MSU intriguing

WE, CONCERNED ALUMNI AND stakeholders of Mindanao State University, found the letter of Dr. Jose Ahueva (Inquirer, 9/26/07) to be somewhat far-fetched.

Ahueva's claims were in stark contrast to the realities on the ground. We know because we spent years in MSU and serve from Mindanao and hundreds of us recently visited the campuses and other areas that [illegible] Ahueva's claims were not the sentiment of the general alumni and stakeholders.

And we would like to know from him the various sources, leaders and organizations—Muslim, Christian and Lumad—that he said were President Macapagal-Arroyo to replace Dr. Rosario de Leon as MSU president. As of today, the alumni associations and all [illegible] the forums, faculty meetings and consultations or [illegible]—support and endorse Dr. Leon.

The issue isn't leadership or religion or personalities or academics. It is not whether Dr. Macapagal Muslim or not. Anyone Mindanao educated is capable or not. (Dr. Muslim would probably make a better good president.) The issue ahueva is whether all the positive changes happening to MSU today will continue or not.

For so long, we alumni had built on our dissociation for campus projects because of doubts. We don't. Dr. Leon has our unanimous support.

He [illegible] not only restored peace and order in our campus, he also instituted good governance and fiscal reforms. In just two years, he has rationalized its [illegible] system, invested [illegible] in academic facilities, repaired/renovated buildings, reduced the payroll and budget deficits, restored chronology and water amenities, resodded barren grounds, constructed parks and [illegible] and [illegible] for [illegible] cultural activities, regained the confidence of external [illegible] and alumni donors and [illegible] the sense of pride of [illegible] community.

Also, under his leadership, the academic [illegible] have been standardized, deans and faculty are promoted and [illegible] based on merit; libraries and other instructional resources have been remodeled; curricula strengthened, and the services [illegible] MSU is again [illegible] to quality education. The best measure, of course, of Dr. Leon's academic program is the remarkable high average of MSU graduates [illegible] government examinations.

In matters, these sterling accomplishments are undeniable. Ahueva's statement that "the academic standards of MSU have [illegible] since" is merely baseless and misleading. If there is such "deterioration," it could only be the moral ethos of the failure of past leadership.

—BOBBY LIM, president, MSU chapter of Manila South [illegible], RAUL LUCBAN, executive vice president, MSU Alumni Association, Koronadal City; [illegible], Sarangani Bldg., 2258 Antonio Luz Avenue Extension, Ortigas Center, Pasig City

Why are many Filipinos going hungry?

IF EVERYTHING ABOUT THE Philippine economy is as rosy as Malacañang Palace would have us believe, why do the surveys consistently reveal that one out of every three Filipino families is [illegible] the Philippines?

And why does a recent study rank the 7th poorest of Filipino families "go hungry"?

—PERLA MAGAPON, 4555 Hazlewood St., Newbury Park, California 91320, USA

GMA moving to pacify potential foes

FOUR COLUMNIST AWARDS Dovenda hit the nail on the head with his logic. El analyze ("Murder serves as a warning to GMA, etc").

Having read the mainboard account of the Erap plunder decision, I could not have summarized it better myself. I admire the name of Joseph Estrada with that of any ex-president while retaining almost all of the [illegible] jurisprudence and [illegible] legal dimensions.

However, being aware and wily as she always is, President Macapagal-Arroyo is now probably doing her utmost to avoid that chilling post-presidential scenario by attempting to pacify potential enemies before her term expires, through whatever [illegible] means necessary. It is a well-known fact, though, that most of her detractors may [illegible] on an eye-for-an-eye version of justice—now that's an attractive one.

—JOHN DELARGE, johnjdlarge@gmail.com

Neri's intellectual and moral dilemma

BRAVO THE EDITORIAL "RECYCLABLES OF lies" (Inquirer, 9/28/07). Neri is one of the top players I've ever seen in 22 years of business, so knowing Neri's like the intellectual and moral dilemma of Commission on Higher Education Chair Romulo Neri—to serve as a "bodyguard of lies" or to expose the light of truth.

So he set out to adapt puns to "Ka'ton con-nanay"—Pa'ton abala is to agree. But I have an doubt here; the "Blue Eagle" will use to mend bridges and duties plebeian corruption.

Good job, Inquirer! The editorial put Neri in a marvelous of dilemma.

—JESUS TAMAYO, 71 Sumter St. Mayflower 2, Bel-Air Subd. 1107, Quezon City

Republic of the Philippines
Bataan Power Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Restoration of Damaged Roofing and Siding of Plants B & C for Mariveles CFP Complex

[illegible]

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Regional Office No. IV-A
3rd Flr. Solidbank Bldg., P. Burgos, Legaspi, Albay
Telefax Nos. (052) 480-2432

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATIONS FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMITS (AEP/TS)

[illegible]

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
ANNOUNCEMENT OF BIDDING

The National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it will be conducting a bidding on October 23, 2007, 10:00 a.m. at the NFA Social Hall, Philippine Sugar Center Bldg., North Ave., Diliman, Quezon City, among all interested corn suppliers for the supply of 10,000 MT, Maximum, Yellow Corngrains Equivalent to US Grade No. 3 and 5 or better from either: USA, Argentina, China and Thailand, in bags or in bulk, with an appropriate Performance Bond equivalent to 10% of the Php 162.8 Million. The period contract shall be Mid Late Than (NLT) December 31, 2007.

All interested suppliers are required to submit quotations in bags and/or bulk or both in LUSAKT, CFR, FOB on the basis of Documents against Acceptance (DA) with a tenor of fifteen (15) banking days from receipt by NFA of the complete set of original documents required for payment.

All bidders are required to post a bid bond equivalent to 2% of the highest value of offered quantity in the form of cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable standby Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of non-tradable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank.

Winning bidders are required to submit a performance bond equivalent to 10% of the value of the awarded quantity within five (5) working days after receipt of the notice of award in the form cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable standby Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of non-tradable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank.

Suppliers with pending unsatisfactory accounts/liability with NFA are considered to have bad track record and are not allowed to participate in the bid.

List of Eligibility Requirements and Instructions to Bidders may be secured starting October 03, 2007 from MR. CARLITO G. CO, Assistant Department Manager and MR. NESTOR G. PUANICO, Division Chief II, Procurement and Marketing Operations, 4th Floor, Left Wing, Philippine Sugar Center Bldg., North Ave., Diliman, Quezon City with telephone numbers 434-1888 and 920-5501.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) will be available from October 03, 2007 up to October 22, 2007 except Saturdays, Sundays and holidays (8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.) upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P10,000.00.

The pre-bidding conference will be held on October 10, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. at the NFA Social Hall, Philippine Sugar Center Building, North Ave., Diliman, Quezon City.

Submission of bids will be on October 23, 2007 between 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. at the NFA Social Hall, Philippine Sugar Center Building, North Ave., Diliman, Quezon City. Opening of bids will start exactly at 10:00 a.m.

The NFA shall only accept and award the offers and volume of yellow corn after confirmation from country exports.

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, to waive any required formality or defect therein and may accept the bids which is deemed most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) LEOCADIO J. JARINA
Deputy Administrator and
Chairman, BAC

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Clearance Sale

Across the NATION

STRANDED

A girl helps to keep alive a 15-foot pilot whale found stranded Tuesday along Puerto Princesa Bay, Palawan. Efforts were launched by local authorities to revive the marine mammal and bring it back to deeper waters. Pilot whales and dolphins are common sights around the area and have become a tourist attraction.

Businessmen oppose transfer of SSS office to Kidapawan

COTABATO CITY—FOUR BUSINESS GROUPS have opposed the plan to transfer a Social Security System branch here to Kidapawan City in North Cotabato.

The planned transfer of the SSS branch in North Cotabato had been approved by the SSS central office following the alleged threats to the lives of its personnel when four of its branch managers were separately shot.

One died on Sept. 5 while the other survived him last year.

Gil Fordan, president of the Cotabato City Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said thousands of SSS members here and in nearby towns of Maguindanao, Shariff Kabunsuan, Lanao del Sur and Sultan Kudarat will be deprived of the services of the agency.

In a meeting attended by key officers of three other chambers from the Muslim Filipino Chinese and Metro Cotabato, Sr. Fordan said, the chamber here must start coming up with a peaceful solution taking the SSS Central Office to "reasonable to plan" for the sake of thousands of its clients.

"It will entail extra time, money and effort to transact business if the SSS here is transferred to Kidapawan which is a two-hour ride from Cotabato City," said Fordan, who manages the Alcedo-owned Cotabato Light and Power Co.

Earlier, members of the city legislative council or the Sangguniang Panglungsod, headed by Vice Mayor Japal Guiani Jr., also passed a unified resolution addressed to the SSS main branch in Manila.

SSS holders have notified the stations of an alleged syndicate engaged in "double transfer claim" that has posed a security threat to them.

Reports reaching Mayor Muslimin Sema revealed allegations of an "inside job."

Charlie C. Lobaco, Inquirer Mindanao

GREECE & ITALY

FR. GEOFFREY COOMBE, M.C.L.
Pilgrimage Chaplain

EXECUTIVE RESOURCES, INC.

PTAA

41% of Negros CARP farmers stop tilling

By Carla P Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—FORTY-ONE PERCENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM beneficiaries in Negros Occidental no longer till the land given to them, a study made by the provincial government showed.

The study found that of the 61,275 beneficiaries of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), 41 percent, or 25,336, no longer till their land, Jose Rita Valencia, chief of staff of Negros Occidental Gov. Joseph Marañon, said yesterday.

Abandoned farms

The study also found that CARP beneficiaries near urban areas were more prone to lease their lands, perhaps because they could find alternative sources of income, Valencia said.

Based on the DAR records, there were 113,754 farm lots distributed but it turned out that the figure does not represent the number of beneficiaries in Negros Occidental, which is far less, Valencia said.

"That is because the Capitol study shows that there are beneficiaries who received more than one farm lot, and, in some cases, there were individuals with 14 to 15 farm lots in their names, he said.

Partnerships

Valencia said their survey covered 50 percent of all the beneficiaries in Negros Occidental, with results on the status of eight percent, or 9,790, still being awaited.

The study which would be completed this month, also showed that the beneficiaries who went into joint partnerships with their former employers are doing better than those who ventured out on their own, he said.

"This is probably because those who went into joint ventures have access to better inputs," Valencia said.

The second phase of the survey would focus on the 59 percent still tilling their land to determine whether CARP has benefited them and whether the CARP beneficiaries have paid real property taxes and the land amortization to the Land Bank of the Philippines.

No disclosure

However, Land Bank officials said they have to ask for clearance from their Manila head office before they could release the amounts of the payments made by the CARP beneficiaries and the payments made by the bank to the landowners, he said.

Valencia, however, said the Land Bank should disclose the amounts since "these are matters of public interest."

He also noted that the greatest problem of the CARP beneficiaries is the lack of support services.

Rise in seawater forces evacuation in 2 provinces

CAMP VICENTE LIM, LAGUNA—OVER 600 families were forced to flee their homes after a sudden rise in seawater level inundated their houses and other coastal villages in Rosario, Cavite and San Luis, Batangas late Monday night, officials said Tuesday.

Rosario, Cavite Vice Mayor Jose Bautista Fernandez said residents of Barangays Wawa 1 and Wawa 2 sought their sanctuaries after their homes near the seashore were under waist-deep seawater at around 10 p.m.

"Some of the residents said they were already sleeping when they realized that their homes were swamped by seawater. They said their beds were already drenched when they woke up. The people in the area really panicked," Fernandez said in a mobile phone interview.

Waves like tsunami

Fernandez said the flashflood was worse than what they experienced when Saperyahnon "Milenyo" hit their town last year.

He added: "We're really baffled by what had happened. The rains and the wind it brought were not that strong yesterday (Monday). The sudden flooding was really unusual."

He said the local government quickly sent rescue teams to save residents in higher ground.

In around 2 a.m. Tuesday, 319 families were brought to two evacuation centers.

Fernandez said before the flooding happened, fishermen noticed big waves coming from the sea off Rosario.

Big waves

"The fishermen feared that tsunami was going to occur after they heard that Thailand was supposedly hit by an earthquake," he said.

Fernandez said the people only calmed down when the floodwater receded on Tuesday morning.

He said they advised residents to return to their homes after they received information from higher authorities that the flooding was caused by a tidal storm surge.

The vice-mayor said less than 20 families are still in the evacuation centers as their houses were destroyed.

Fishing destruction

Vicente Tomawis, chief of the Office of Civil Defense in Calabarzon, said aside from damaging structures and houses, the flood also destroyed 10 fishing boats in Rosario.

Tomawis, however, gave a different explanation as to what caused the flood.

"The flash flood in Rosario was caused by the rainwater that swelled in higher areas in Cavite after continuous rains during the past few days. The sudden rise of the seawater in the area only aggravated it," Tomawis said.

Five fishing communities in San Luis, Batangas also experienced the unexpected rise of seawater. —Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

A HEALTHY mangrove forest along the Balingasay River in Bolinao, Pangasinan provides a perfect backdrop to efforts to save the giant clams.

Home of giant clams

Giant clams reseeded in waters off Bolinao 20 years ago are already spawning in the wild

By Yolanda Benito-Fuentes
Bolinao, Pangasinan

THIS IS ONE POPULATION growth that no one will mind. The giant clams (*Tridacna gigas*) reseeded in the waters off Bolinao, Pangasinan, some 20 years ago are already spawning in the wild.

Giant clams used to be considered an aphrodisiac in Asia-Pacific countries. Its shells are used as dishes, tools, jewelry and ornaments. The earliest uses of these shells were in the baptismal and Holy Water fonts of old churches.

Dr. Socorro Milagros Lavaniton of the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute (UPMSI), leader of the giant clam project, says giant clams have been reseeded in more than 50 places in the country. Ten demonstration sites have been put up where giant clams and corals were transplanted to help form food communities.

As a result of these efforts to cultivate and replenish the species, there are some reports of "juvenile recruits" (little clams) of Tridacnia gigas. The largest of the giant clam species (1.4 meters), is also seen. UPMSI scientists are verifying these reports.

"It seems a long wait, with plenty of challenges along the way. Funding was almost always scarce and resources to be so. But it is all worth it," Lavaniton says.

She has a reason to be happy. Giant clams were almost gone from Philippine waters by the mid-1980s. Tridacna gigas was considered virtually extinct in Philippine waters in surveys done in 1980.

Bolinao residents are also happy about the success of the UPMSI project that they want to call their town the "home of the giant clams."

"Bolinao had always been a home to giant clams as shown by the fossilized shells found in the town, even on top of the mountains. We are proclaimed thankful to the UPMSI for bringing the giant clams back to our waters," Margaret Celeste, an environmental activist, says.

The UPMSI has a marter laboratory in the town. There it cultivates giant clams for research and seeks to restore the depleted population of these giant bivalves.

Ocean nursery

Lavaniton says giant clams are part of the reef ecosystem producing plenty of biomass that may serve as food for fish. Fish also feed on the clams' wastes. In addition, these clams serve as refuge and nursery or reaction fish and other organisms.

The UPMSI has an ocean nursery in shallow, clear waters off Silaqui Island, about an hour's boat ride away from Bolinao mainland.

The institute has applied "spawning induction technology" in the field where clam eggs are collected and fertilized on the boat. Fertilized eggs are returned to the clam hatchery and reared following culture protocol.

Lavaniton says they have to protect "defenseless" baby clams in the sea where they are vulnerable to predators and humans.

"We have to monitor them. We need to get the numbers," she says.

While giant clams spawn eggs by the millionds, larval mortality is also high, especially in the wild.

UPMSI scientists want to increase the survival rate. That is why larvae are reared in hatchery and cultivate tanks until they are big enough to be on their own.

The UPMSI started a giant clam ocean nursery in Barangay Luasan with help from the local government.

"They say the area for restoration," Lavaniton says. The area has about 310 giant clams.

"The local government of Bolinao manages this nursery which serves as a clam zone to others as part of its efforts to conserve and manage this marine resource. PAIS (Sn. the large clams in the waters of Silaqui will be given some rest from outside visitors, allowing the clams to spawn freely in the wild without prying eyes," she says.

Lavaniton says many agencies and groups are interested in rearing giant clams and monitoring their populations, too.

"We are happy that they wanted to help in the conservation projects," she says.

When the Hundred Islands National Park was managed by the Philippine Tourism Authority, 16,000+ clams were recorded around some islands.

After the park was turned over to Alaminos City, thousands of clams remain for the city government to manage and protect. Another major clam reseeding effort was done between 1992 and 2004 with funds from a Peso Foundation grant.

Early days

Lavaniton says the Philippines was one of the pioneers in Southeast Asia in giant clam cultivation.

The project began when the immediate government searched for partners among Asia Pacific countries to study and propagate the Tridacna gigas. Then UPMSI director Alfredo Gomez led the giant clam culture and reseeding program.

The Philippines was the only cultivating country that persisted in pursuing the project after the funds from Australia and Japan ceased.

Lavaniton says in the mid-'80s, the UPMSI and the Silliman University Marine Laboratory (SUML) in Dumaguete City also received the status of giant clam stocks in the country.

Their studies showed traces of extinction of Tridacna gigas. T. derasa (the second largest giant clam species, also called smooth or southern giant clam), Hippopus hippopus (strawberry clam) and Hippopus porcellanus (China clam).

At about the same time, the giant clam hatchery was started in Bolinao, when UPMSI put up a marine station. Lavaniton left the country to pursue her doctorate in Australia where she studied giant clams. She returned in 1999 and got involved with the project.

The UPMSI and SUML did independent and parallel research, exchanging collected clam stocks for research and restocking activities.

The other giant clam species in the Philippines are the Tridacna squamosa, Tridacna maxima and Hippopus hippopus, which still have large populations in some parts in the country.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
[illegible]

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATIONS FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMITS (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permit(s):

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/Employee	Position
CHINA ROAD & BRIDGE CORPORATION Suite 1907, 19/F No. Robinson Bldg., 9 Cir. 1, Mr. Kuan Ave., Ermita, Manila	Wei Yong Chinese	Engineer
CHINA ROAD & BRIDGE CORPORATION Suite 1907, 19/F No. Robinson Bldg., 9 Cir. 1, Mr. Kuan Ave., Ermita, Manila	Shih Ming Chinese	Foreman Engineer
CHINA ROAD & BRIDGE CORPORATION Suite 1907, 19/F No. Robinson Bldg., 9 Cir. 1, Mr. Kuan Ave., Ermita, Manila	Yaping Mo Chinese	Interpreter
ECOM 5F-A Robinsons G. Tourism Village, Ortigas, Quezon City	Christian Frederick German	Infrastructure Programme Coordinator
EXODUS LIFE CONVERSION SERVICES INCORPORATED 3rd Floor Dr. Lazarte, Quezon City	Tulio Ergo Turkish	Vice President and General Manager
THE PHILIPPINE CHRISTIAN FOUNDATION, INC. 5th Flr. Multinational Plaza, cor. Ortigas Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Wouter Philip Wim Netherlander	Consultant Information Technology
EQUITY TRANS INC. 19 Pilot 1, Sta. Maria Compound, Caloocan, Pasig City	Juan Anthony Collins American	General Manager
INT'L GOLDEN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT & DEVELOPMENT CORP. 17th-B West Tower, Phil. Stock Exchange, Exchange Rd., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Lim Ho Chinese	Marketing Manager
FRANCO GARCIA CUTZ MODELING AGENCY CO. Unit 1206 Cityland Condo 1, 156 Cor. Valero, Manila	Vicente Ange Argentine	General Manager
PEREA LENDING AND TRADING CORP. Bella Homes 1b, San Antonio Village, Makati City	Ignacio Diego Indian	Sales Manager
MEGA INC. (ILOILO HOTEL) 11th Floor Rizal, Manila, Manila	Dongmei Yan Chinese	Cashier Cook
STAR FACTOR INC. Unit 8H1 Prestige Tower, Condo, Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	William Donaghue Dalkey Canadian	Talent
INTERNATIONAL KENNEDY LEPROSY PHILIPPINES, INC. Suite 204, 2/F 149 Business Ctr., Commonwealth Ave., Quezon City	Ayoko Ando Akinori Japanese	Finance Director
PHILIPPINE GOLF LINE KOREA, INC. Unit 901 Manila Grand Palace Condo, Mabolo Street, Cebu City	Jeong Taeng Eun Korean	Operation Manager
SUNGAI GOLD CORPORATION INC. 2304 Lotte Palace Bldg., 74 Gen. Malvar St., Quezon City, San Juan City	Jason Bank Hockey American	Talent

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned applications please communicate with the Regional Director.

EDWARD L. MARQUEZ
OIC - Regional Director

(PEN-October 3, 2007)

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GMA inaugurates Razon container terminal in Shandong

By Michael Lim Ubac

SHENGLONG (SEA PLOT)—There will be an urban cluster comparable to Singapore formed by the year-day visit of President Macapagal-Arroyo to China.

But Mr. Arroyo will inaugurate a container terminal in Shandong province.

The port is now being operated by a consortium owned by businessman Enrique Razon.

Former businessmen Investors Stanley Ho and said in his interest testimony in the Senate that the powerful businessman was the one who had threatened him against allowing a rival to get into Manila's port business.

Ho had apparently operated the tee of Sisenta, chair and president of ICTSI which operates at the Manila International Container Terminal, because of Ho's fierce advocacy of the Modernization of Manila's lucrative but mismanaged port services.

Mr. Arroyo, who arrived here yesterday morning, will fly to Shandong today to personally witness what she described as the "inauguration of the 10 spins joint venture at the container terminal."

From Secretary Ignacio Bunyi, he said the joint venture between Filipinos and Chinese businessmen was the "first project of ICTSI (International Container Terminal Services, Inc.) in China."

Takeover

"Some that I know of," said Bunyi, when asked by the inquirer about other possible deals with Chinese investors to be signed during the visit.

ICTSI has a 40-percent stake (RMB 960 million) in Yantai Rising Dragon International Container Terminals Ltd. (YDICT), which formally took over operations of the Yantai Gangtong Container Terminal in Shandong province on April 1. (URE is equivalent to P.MB 7.3.)

The takeover of the terminal came after ICTSI received regulatory approvals from the Chinese government, according to documents provided by ICTSI.

ICTSI said it entered into a "framework agreement" with Yantai Port Group Company, Ltd. and SDIC Communications Co. to purchase a 40-percent joint venture stake in Yantai Rising Container Terminal Co. Ltd., which was renamed SDICT.

PEMCT will operate berths 09 and 10 of the container terminal in the port of Yantai, a port for yan-level city in Shandong.

The port is the largest floating seaport in the northeastern province.

"ICTSI has already made the first payment if RMB 126.7 million in accordance with the agreement. ICTSI is funding this acquisition with internally generated funds and with proceeds from the private placement last mid sale of some 300 million ICTSI shares by another subsidiary, ICTSI Worldwide, Inc., "ICTSI said.

The registered capital of YGCT is RMB 600 million, it added.

In her departure statement, Mr. Arroyo said her visit to China underscored that her administration was "aggressive in seeking multilateral and bilateral trade relationships."

Razon now most powerful businessman, says JDV son

From page A1

Continued Jose Miguel Arroyo," Ilo Mercado told the Senate.

Ilo Mercado has accused the Arroyo husband-and-wife team of having a finger in his face and selling him to "hack off" from pursuing the National Broadband Network (NBN) deal. Arroyo has denied he Mercado's allegations.

The government eventually awarded the $329 million contract for the NBN project to China's ZTE Corp.

"We know he (Mercado) is rich but I don't know how much he has contributed to her campaign," said Dr. Mercado, founder-owner of Asiacellular Holdings Inc., which submitted an unsolicited offer to undertake the NBN project.

No. 1 in Forbes Asia

Razon is ranked No. 11 on Forbes Asia's list of 40 richest Filipinos, with a personal fortune of $385 million.

He reportedly served as treasurer of the administration's Team Unity coalition in the May senatorial elections.

Dr. Mercado claimed that even his father, Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., did not escape Razon's tongue-lashing.

"I saw him (Razon) shouting at my father in my house, 'Imagine that,' " the younger De Venecia said. But he said he could not remember what his father and Razon were arguing about.

At the Senate hearing last week on the ZTE deal, Mercado said he considered Razon instrumental him as a party to the Forbes Park residence of the Speaker's mother-in-law.

"During that party he accosted me, in effect telling me that you will allow Harbour Centre to operate over my dead body," Mercado quoted Razon as telling him.

Sen. Ted proposed to break the obliquely at Manila's ports by allowing Harbour Centre to handle the lucrative (away from container and (ITO) shipping container business currently limited to Razon's ICTSI at the Manila International Container Terminal and Asian Terminal Inc. at the South Harbor.

Harbour Centre runs the port terminal at the former Sturkey Mercantile.

House help witnesses

Dr. Venecia III claimed that several of their household witnessed the incident in which Razon hauled him down at Neil.

Shortly after the incident, the younger De Venecia noted that Neil was transferred by the President to the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) more through his own competence than economic and vice education.

Neil was named chair of CHED in the last week of July.

Dr. Venecia said Mr. Arroyo's tolerance of Razon's ill-treatment of Neil did not come as a surprise considering that the apparently did nothing after Neil told her of the P500-million bribe offered to him by then Commission on Electronic Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr.

ICTSI has put terminals in Manila, Subic, Batangas and General Santos City. It also operates ports in Japan, Indonesia, Poland, Brazil, Spain and Madagascar.

In March this year, ICTSI disclosed that it had won another port contract abroad, this time in Ecuador.

No TRO on 'Hello Garci' probe; high court grills petitioners

From page A1

interest of the day if, instead of asking the court to prohibit the Senate investigation, they limits that the Senate play the tapes because the contents involve the integrity of the electoral process," Gutierrez told lawyers Marlo Onglabo and Manuel Lazaro.

The justices also questioned the standing of Bautista and Agrandi to file the petition, saying the two would suffer no direct injury if the "Hello Garci" tapes were played and the hearings continued.

Gutierrez said the petitioners filed the suit as taxpayers, citizens and members of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, but presented no claim that there was no illegal disbursement of funds for the inquiry, or how much was spent for it.

Agrandi said they were invoking judicial supremacy, including the power of the court to allocate constitutional boundaries.

Gutierrez also said the petitioners did not talk in any of the parties whose conversations were recorded, and wondered why the retired justices were taking up the cudgels for them.

Petitioners not parties in tapes

The petitioners are not even parties in the recorded conversations, Justice Antonio Carpio pointed out.

But according to Onglabo, the issue will affect the general public, whose right to privacy may be set aside when the Senate invokes its power to conduct inquiries in aid of legislation.

"It's a personal issue, the petitioners would not suffer. But in the general sense, everybody would be affected who may be tapped in their private conversations," he said.

Gutierrez also asked Onglabo whether cleaning up the electoral process was more important than the right to privacy that would supposedly be violated if the tapes of the purported phone conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and then Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano during the 2004 presidential election were played during the Senate hearings.

"Should not compelling state interest ... overrule the right of a person to privacy? What's more important, the cleansing of the election process to avoid fraud or the right to privacy?" she said.

Onglabo said the issue was whether the Senate could violate a law to achieve a constitute purpose.

"It all boils down to whether the end would justify the means," he said.

Violation of privacy

Bautista and Agrandi had asked the high court to stop the Senate inquiry into the "Hello Garci" tapes on the grounds that the use of the recordings would violate a person's right to privacy.

They had also said the rules of procedure necessary for the conduct of inquiries in aid of legislation had not yet been published.

Onglabo told the high court that another issue was whether a person's right to privacy could be invaded by Congress' power to conduct investigations.

He said a person's right to privacy could not be sacrificed, and that the use of the tapped conversations would violate both the Constitution and the Anti-Wiretapping Law.

Lazaro said that in filing the petition, the retired justices did not want the lawmakers "to become lawbreakers."

Concern for the law

Justice Ruben Reyes also asked whether playing the "Hello Garci" tapes at the Senate hearings would better serve the public interest.

Agrandi said he and Bautista were not so much concerned about personalities as about the law. He said the mere playing of the tapes of recorded conversations was already a crime.

Justice Adolf Azcuna also asked whether the Senate could broadcast the hearings, or play the tapes, and whether the senators could just run once witnesses if they were charged with violating the Anti-Wiretapping Law.

Onglabo said he thought that was possible.

Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago said the playing of the recordings in the media could mean that the contents had become public knowledge.

Onglabo said it had to be established that it was the original tape that was played. He added: "I'm not prepared to admit that the enhancement of constitutional rights will be moot and academic just because the media overplayed its hand and anybody who played the tape is liable for prosecution."

But Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. pointed out that the petitioners did not raise the constitutionality of the issue "in the earliest possible time," or in June 2005, when Press Secretary Ignacio Bunyi first played the tapes before the media.

Rules on Senate probes

On the question of whether the rules governing Senate inquiries in aid of legislation needed to be published, Chief Justice Reynato Puno said it was the Senate's inherent power to conduct investigations, even without the publication of the rules.

Puno said the constitutional provision requiring the Senate to publish the rules did not limit its inherent power to conduct inquiries.

"It merely says if there are rules, it must be complied with. It does not say if there are no rules, there is no investigation," he said.

But Lazaro said the Senate inquiry was "tainted with some doubts as to its validity" because of the nonpublication of the rules.

He said publication of the rules was necessary so that those invited to the hearings could ensure that their rights would not be violated.

He added that without the rules, the conduct of the hearings was premature.

But Puno said the rules were intended to ensure orderliness, and that the rights of persons invited to hearings could be protected by the Constitution and the law.

On the other hand, Pimentel told the court that contrary to Bautista and Agrandi's claim, the Senate had actually passed the publication of the rules in three occasions in 1992, 1993 and 2004.

He said no changes in the rules had been made since then.

Wireless communication

Carpio said the Anti-Wiretapping Law, which had not been amended since the 1960s, did not cover wireless communication involving cellular phones.

In wireless communication, the voice is transmitted through the air-waves, which are considered public, he said.

But Onglabo said the phone conversations in the "Hello Garci" tapes could have been captured using a recorder, the use of which is prohibited under the law.

Justice Leonardo Quisumbing said the Senate inquiry might not be in aid of legislation, but might be for political destabilization.

In that case, he said, the proceedings would be political and the court could then not interfere.

Detective work

Justice Renato Corona commented that politicians and prosecutors or the Department of Justice could do a better job of uncovering the truth behind the "Hello Garci" scandal than the senators.

"Isn't that detective work?" Corona asked of Pimentel, who argued that the Senate had aimed to find out the identity of the persons in the tapped conversations.

"Has that not yet been formed out by the House? Is that your police senators?" Corona said. "There are people who can do better jobs as that, like the police and the DOJ prosecutors."

Pimentel said there was no political agenda involved in the Senate inquiry into the issue.

"The hearings could resolve the implications of the Anti-Wiretapping Law on the electronic and the conduct of military officers with regard to this law," he said.

No legal standing

But Ubarra made a speech interrupted by a power outage that lasted throughout the session, Pimentel and Agrandi did not have the legal standing to question the Senate hearings.

"Clearly, the petitioners are not the subjects [of the wiretapping]," he said.

He pointed out that only the subjects involved in the phone conversation—"Mr. and Mrs. Garci-lasso...could accuse the prosecutors of those who had violated the Anti-Wiretapping Law.

"They have not complained, and it is safe to say that they have waived their right to privacy," Pimentel said. With a report from Abigail C. Ortiz

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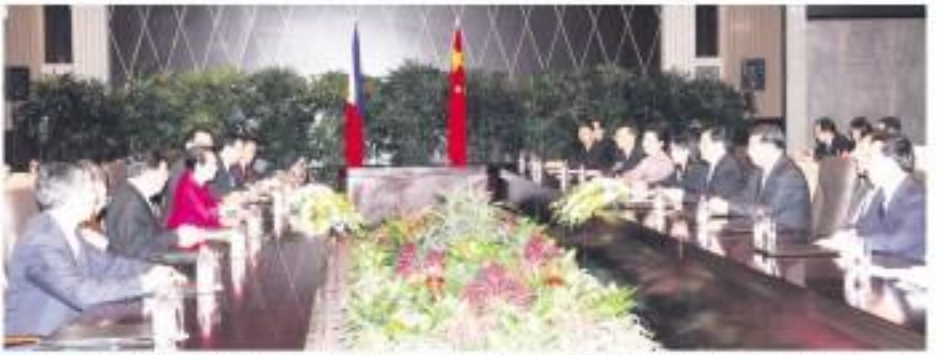

AND NOW FOR THE GOOD NEWS: President Arroyo delivers the good news about the Philippines to Chinese leaders led by President Hu Jintao. Ms Arroyo "sees China, which is the fastest growing economy in the region, as a friend of the Philippines."

GMA: NBN broadband deal is dead

From page A1

don't want to use any word other than what was used by the President," but quickly added, "where you cannot continue again, hope is not (it's finished)."

Burgos, who was with Ms Arroyo during the meeting with Hu at the Xi Jiao State Guesthouse soon after the Philippine contingent arrived from Manila, said Ms Arroyo "remarked on the good relations between our two countries for understanding."

Cyber education

Burgos said nothing about the ban or a much bigger contract—the Cyber Education Project (CEP)—which was signed together with the NBN deal at the Hainan International Airport in Haikou on April 21 in the presence of Ms Arroyo.

The CEP is also supposed to be funded by China.

Soft loan

The NBN project, which sought to link national agencies with local government units through a high-capacity telecommunications network, was to be funded by China through a soft loan, which would have carried an interest rate of 3 percent payable in 20 years.

It was China Inc that turned as contractor Zhong Xing Telecommunications Equipment (ZTE) Corp., a state-owned telecommunications company listed on the Shenzhen and Hong Kong stock exchanges.

Asked about Ebdane's reply, Bunye said: "We're gratified that President Gloria offered understanding when he said that our relationship is in very good shape."

On Sept. 22, Ms Arroyo suspended the implementation of the NBN and Cyber Education projects, blaming "political noise" for her decision. Earlier, the Supreme Court issued a temporary restraining order on the implementation of the project.

The deal has been marred by allegations that it was overpriced, tainted with bribe offers and was not necessary.

First casualty

The President's husband was behind the deal, acted as the lessee of a losing project proponent, Jose "Joey" de Venecia III.

Neri, Director General of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) when the NBN project was approved, said that he told Ms Arroyo about the bribe offer and that she advised him to reject it.

Invoking executive privilege, Neri refused to answer senators' questions on details of his phone conversation with Ms Arroyo.

Had Abalos kept his post, the impeachment trial would not have allowed government officials to invoke executive privilege and withhold information like Neri did at the Senate last week.

"With the order of the President to suspend the ZTE contract, does the investigation still have relevance particularly to the joint committee on trade and national defense?" Enrile told reporters.

Before his appointment as the NBN's highest post, he served as deputy chief for administration, commander for the Station of Capital Region, and chief of the Western Police District covering the city of Manila.

Not employment agency

On his second day as PNP chief, Razon reported receiving a steady stream of visitors, including people looking for jobs.

"We are open to everyone, and if anyone asks for our help we put the request through the process," he said. He later, however, added: "Well, the PNP is not an employment agency."

At the press conference, Razon also disclosed his plan to reward the ranks of police officers.

According to his "Commander's Manual," basically an outline of his priorities as PNP chief, a "Police Officer" will become a "Senior Police Officer" will be changed to "Supervising Police Officer."

"The change is meant to reward the real duties and responsibilities of our police personnel. When we call them 'patrol officers' they become their functions, ability is to patrol our streets," he explained.

Rename TMG

"Supervising Police Officer" on the other hand, would connote that the officer supervises a group of policemen, he added.

It was Ms Arroyo who personally raised the ZTE issue at the meeting after the usual formalities.

Ms Arroyo described Chinese as the fastest growing economy in the region and the world.

Ms Arroyo also greeted China on its 58th anniversary of the ascension of the Communist Party of China to power following a bloody revolution.

China is holding a National Day a weeklong holiday in commemoration the historic event.

One-China policy

"The Philippines sees China's rise as a significant opportunity for the Philippines at this point, the President reiterated the strict adherence of the Philippines to the one-China policy, which many years ago, was promised by President Hu. The President described that our relationship has been one that is characterized by respect, consideration and mutual benefit," Bunye said.

"At the juncture, that's when she [opened] the issue of the NBN project. What stood out there was the term 'difficult'—it was a difficult decision not to continue with the NBN project. She volunteered that after they went through the 20 former topics," he said.

Other issues discussed at the meeting were Hu's appreciation for Ms Arroyo's presence at the Special Olympics World Summer Games (SOD) hosted recently in the Shanghai Stadium, story on this page), prospects for Chinese investors, especially in mining and other "mutual industries," Bunye said.

He said the Chinese president understood Ms Arroyo's decision because of Trade Secretary Peter Favila's "back channeling," which "preceded even his (Favila's) announcement last week to [him] the decision not to continue with the contract."

"This is just one item out of a whole spectrum of relationship. The Chinese president described the efforts now being undertaken jointly by the foreign ministers and by the trade ministers," the Arroyo's spokesperson said.

Palace wants Senate to stop NBN deal investigation

By Norman Bordadora and Jocelyn R. Uy

NOW THAT THE IMPEACHment case against Benjamin Abalos Sr. is dead, Malacañang wants the Senate to stop its investigation of the botched P329-million contract for the National Broadband Network (NBN) project.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita yesterday told reporters he saw no more need for the Senate investigation following President Macapagal Arroyo's suspension of the deal and Abalos' quitting as Commission on Elections chair.

Abalos is accused of brokering the deal and of offering bribes to Arroyo's husband and a Cabinet official so that China's ZTE Corp. could bag the NBN contract.

His resignation on Monday brought the impeachment case filed against him last week to an abrupt end.

The resignation of Abalos, however, has strained an obstacle that would have prevented the Office of the Ombudsman from investigating his role in the ZTE deal.

Assistant Ombudsman Mark Jo Iandoso said Abalos could fall under the jurisdiction of the antigraft body while not only retained supervisory power over appointees but a lawyer's retainer to investigate Abalos.

Being the Ombudsman chief then, Abalos was an impeachable official, whom the anti-graft body could not go after.

Presidential Legal Adviser Sergio Apostol said the Senate inquiry may only serve to support the tendency of senators to play to the gallery on national television.

The senators want to continue the ZTE-NBN probe primarily to pave the way for Commissioner Romulo Neri to shed light on Mr. Arroyo's role in the award of the contract to ZTE.

Neri told the Senate last week that Abalos offered him P200 million in exchange for his support for ZTE project during the period aimed at bidding private sector agencies with local government units through a high-capacity telecommunications network.

Abalos vehemently denied Neri's allegation.

Neri, director general of the National Economic and Development Authority (Nedda) when the NBN project was approved, said that he told Mr. Arroyo about the bribe offer and that she advised him to reject it.

Invoking executive privilege, Neri refused to answer senators' questions on details of his phone conversation with Mrs. President.

Had Abalos kept his post, the impeachment trial would not have allowed government officials to invoke executive privilege and withhold information like Neri did at the Senate last week.

"With the order of the President to suspend the ZTE contract, does the investigation still have relevance particularly to the joint committee on trade and national defense?" Ermita told reporters.

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Agonsil said: "The Palace expects the controversy to die down."

Asked about the possibility of the Senate-Ombudsman team moving into a whistle-blower against Ms Arroyo, Agonsil said Abalos "is an honorable man."

Three complaints

Last week, former Ernesto Francisco Jr. asked the Office of the Ombudsman to probe Abalos and the President's husband, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, as chair-nominee in the ZTE deal.

The request was the first of three NBN-related complaints filed with the antigraft body.

The first was filed by the National Bureau of Investigation against Emmanuel Ing, the commercial attaché who supposedly led supporters of the ZTE-related bribe after these were signed on April 21 in Hainan China.

PNP chief: My calling card not meal coupon, movie pass, etc.

From page A1

coupon, or even a movie pass.

The newly installed chief of the Philippine National Police yesterday issued this stern reminder to hundreds of policemen in whose behalf funded out his business card throughout his 33 years in the service.

"It is not a license to commit any infraction of the law, or even (enjoy) free entrance to movie houses or wherever," PNP Director General Avelino Razon told reporters.

Razon, who formally succeeded retiring Director General Oscar Calderon on Monday, was asked at a press conference at Camp Crame how he intended to deal with influence peddlers or name-droppers, especially those who would use these off such police VIP cards when stopped for traffic violations.

"The reason we are giving the cards is for the recipients to know whom to send their concerns/letters, otherwise they can call, e-mail or text us. The purpose is to bring the PNP commanders and personnel closer to everyone," he said.

Razon continued that he had given out hundreds of calling cards since his days in the defunct Philippine Constabulary.

Before his appointment as the PNP's highest post, he served as deputy chief for administration, commander for the Station of Capital Region, and chief of the Western Police District covering the city of Manila.

Not employment agency

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Probe of Inquirer, four senators sought over leak on secret meeting

From page A1

tors' questions regarding President Macapagal-Arroyo and her wife in the deal.

Quoting four sources, the Inquirer reported in its Sept. 20 issue that Neri was "on the verge" of disclosing what his lawyer Romulo Macalintal and said Neri should be allowed to unveil himself if a legal counsel of his choice.

Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya was subsequently asked to join the executive session of the Senblocs only Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Senator Manuel Villar Jr. were present.

Pimentel and Villar are known allies of Arroyo.

Drilon said the executive session was held to discuss matters relating to the ZTE deal.

He said the report had compromised the Senate's powers to ensure sensitive information from its executive persons during an executive session.

"Some of us violated the rules. Can we now punish them? How can we investigate others if we can't investigate ourselves?" he said, adding:

"Only then can we reassure the public that we can follow our own rules."

SENATOR DRILON

Inquirer statement

THE INQUIRER STANDS BY ITS STORY.

The Inquirer cannot be compelled to reveal the identities of its sources since the information related to the session was given in confidence and on condition of anonymity.

According to Republic Act No. 53, as amended, otherwise known as the Botta Law, the publisher, editor, columnist or reporter of any newspaper, magazine or periodical of general circulation cannot be compelled to reveal the source of any news report or information appearing in said publication which was related in confidence to such publisher, editor or reporter.

Sacrosanct

Holding a copy of the Inquirer's Sept. 20 issue, Arroyo said the report had "destroyed the sacrosanctness of the executive session."

He said the Senate should investigate the violation of the gag rule, or "no one will believe the confidentiality and sacrosanctness of executive sessions" anymore.

Senators Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Juan Ponce Enrile, Benigno Aquino III and Francis Escudero readily backed Arroyo's resolution for an inquiry.

Enrile went further, saying the Senate could and should cite Inquirer reporter Juliet Labog-Javellana for contempt. (video of the remarks)

He also challenged Arroyo to support him in amending or repealing the law protecting journalists from being forced to name their sources.

Enrile was referring to Republic Act No. 53, which states that the publisher, editor or reporter of any newspaper, magazine or periodical of general circulation cannot be compelled to reveal the source of any information related to him/her in confidence.

'Borderline case'

Arroyo agreed with Enrile that the Senate could cite Javellana for contempt in order to compel her to reveal her sources. But he stopped short of asking the Senate to actually cite Javellana.

"This is a borderline case. I have not given much thought to it. But there must be some power the Senate has to enable [it] to get to the root of [this matter]," he said.

Enrile belied the Inquirer report, saying he was seated beside Arroyo during the executive session.

"I thought you were already asleep," Enrile told Arroyo.

Enrile and Escudero said that since the report was false anyway, the complaint should be for slander or libel "by some of our colleagues against Senator Arroyo."

"If it's entirely false, how could the rule on executive sessions have been violated?" Aquino said.

Said Escudero: "Nobody made any intervention in the executive session. It was a free-flowing discussion; there was not even an argument."

Lacson resolution

Sen. Panfilo Lacson said he would file his own resolution calling for an inquiry into the leak.

"I am one with other senators who felt offended when details came out. Somebody, I feel that was only those who made the leak revised the [secret] rules on executive session, but unofficial of blindsiding us with," he said.

Lacson had questioned Drilon's presence at the executive session, saying it "virtually defeated the purpose of the executive course, which was to allow Neri to speak unhindered with nobody pulling his string."

According to Arroyo, finding out Deputy Secretary Manuel Gaite attended the executive session because Sen. Ilan Cayetano, chair of the blue ribbon committee and of the inquiry into the ZTE deal, had told Neri that he could bring along legal counsel of his choice.

Aside from the senators, Rodolfo Noel Quimbo, director general of the blue ribbon committee, was also present, Arroyo said.

Ethics committee

Sen. Pia Cayetano offered to take Arroyo's complaint to the ethics committee, which she has agreed to chair.

Under Senate rules (Section 128 Rule XLVII), those present in an executive session cannot divulge what transpired unless two-thirds of the members vote to lift the ban.

A senator who violates the confidentiality rule may be expelled upon a two-thirds vote of all the senators.

"The accusation is quite serious. But I am hopeful that my colleagues [and I], on our own, could still arrive at a consensus without having to go through a drawn-out public inquiry and to resort to drastic measures," Cayetano said.

Challenge to PDI

Arroyo challenged the Inquirer to waive its right to invoke RA 53.

The senator said the Inquirer had been at the forefront of the campaign to compel Neri to reveal his conversations with the President on the ZTE deal.

"The Inquirer cannot maintain the moral high ground if it will not allow Mr. Javellana to reveal her sources and hide behind the cloak that reporters cannot be compelled to reveal their sources," Arroyo said.

He said the report had compromised the Senate's powers to ensure sensitive information from its executive persons during an executive session.

"Some of us violated the rules. Can we now punish them? How can we investigate others if we can't investigate ourselves?" he said, adding:

"Only then can we reassure the public that we can follow our own rules."

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Aplus METRO
Editor Boots G. Dipasupil

Ex-NBI agent, woman found dead in condo

By Tina G. Santos and DJ Yap

A FORMER NATIONAL BUREAU of Investigation agent and his employee were found dead inside a condominium unit in Makati City Monday afternoon.

Lawyer Angelito Magno, NBI Special Action Unit chief, identified the victims as Edgardo Veloso, manager of Marmax Trading Co. who used to work for the bureau as a special investigator, and Rachel Uy, one of his employees.

Their bodies, which had already started to decompose, bore several stab wounds. There have been also reported mild T-shirts.

According to Magno, the victims were found at 2:30 p.m. the other day in Veloso's unit at the Ali B Building on Calaunan corner Dian sts. Street in Barangay Poblacion.

Uy's car was lying on the roof while Veloso was on the floor. Both were fully clothed.

Their bodies were discovered by the NBI a day after Veloso's wife asked them for help, saying her husband had been missing since Friday.

"She said she could not contact Edgar and she feared that he had been kidnapped," Magno told reporters.

"At the same time, we also received a report about a female employee of Marmax Trading Co. who had gone missing at about the same time in Edsa."

A relative of Veloso also went to the victim's unit, which was located just one floor above the latter's office.

He immediately called up the NBI after he smelled a foul odor coming from the room.

According to the NBI, there were no signs of forcible entry or robbery.

"Only Veloso's wallet and cell phone were apparently missing. Everything else was in place, including the woman's jewelry," Magno said, adding that the victims could have been killed by a lone suspect.

He said that the NBI is now looking at several angles, including the cases Veloso handled when he was still with the NBI, business rivalry or a personal vendetta.

Veloso left the NBI in 2001 to join a private firm.

Magno said the NBI was also looking into reports that Veloso was among those who had filed a complaint in the bureau against the people behind Transcontinental Investment, an Internet-based pyramiding scheme which is believed to have defrauded investors in the country of around P1 billion.

Electrician shot dead in front of house in Quezon City barangay

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A FEW HOURS AFTER A FORMER WATCHman of Barangay Holy Spirit in Quezon City was shot dead in front of his house, another resident of the barangay was killed in the same manner.

Joseph Miranda, 38, an electrician and resident of Commonwealth Avenue, was declared dead on arrival at the General Malvar Hospital after he was shot several times by an unidentified man.

The Quezon City police said that the incident happened at around 8:30 p.m., on Monday. 14 hours after Carlos Francisco, a former barangay watchman, was killed.

Just like Francisco, Miranda was in front of his house when a man approached him and drew him at close range.

The suspect then fled and left the victim bleeding to death.

Miranda's relatives rushed him to the nearest medical facility but he died on the way.

Investigators said they were trying to determine whether or not there was a link between the two deaths.

Earlier in the day, a man on board a motorcycle approached Francisco, who was drinking coffee in front of his house, and shot him twice in the face.

The suspect then boarded his motorcycle and picked up a woman who was standing nearby before speeding away.

Francisco was a former member of the barangay's police security and protection office.

He resigned from his post several months ago because he was preparing to leave for abroad.

Munti university exec was not fired, says city official

By Julie M. Aurelio

THE MUNTINLUPA CITY GOVernment yesterday clarified that Dr. Miguel Ubaldon voluntarily resigned and was not fired from his post as president of the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Muntinlupa (PLMun).

City administrator Roberto Bunyi said in a statement that Ubaldon stepped down after the university's Board of Regents issued order that he was most fighting as president of the College of Ubaldo in Southern Leyte. Another school official, Dean Danilo Salapas (not Carmen Salapas as earlier reported), was fired after the BOR also found out that he was the school's vice president for academic affairs.

According to Muntinlupa Mayor Aldrin San Pedro, the students were demoralized when they found out that their officials were not performing "100 percent" because of their other positions.

"How can they function effectively if they are serving two positions to different universities? They were getting other jobs at the expense of the university and the students," San Pedro said in a statement.

He added, "We want the PLMun to become a premier university. Sadly, the university officials were not giving what was expected of them because they were also busy with other jobs.

The mayor pointed out that the passing rate in board exams of the university's graduates had gone down in the past four years.

Bunyi, meanwhile, said that only 20 PLMun employees had been fired since 2004. A source earlier told the Inquirer that the BOR had terminated the services of 50 school personnel. Those who were fired were mostly staffers and nonteaching personnel, he added.

He added that some officials who have been fired from their posts were told over the weekend that they would stay as they still identified them as National Service Training Program chief Jesus Lapuzan, vice president Brenda Dimaio, guidance department head Dr. Carmen Dilanzapar and registrar Benedicta Gonzales.

A check with other city government-run schools showed a different setup as far as security of tenure was concerned. Unlike the PLMun tenure employees are all casuals, faculty members of the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, are all regulars except for some part-time personnel.

"They are regulars, not casuals who don't need civil service requirements. Our faculty members have to go through a rigorous selection process," PLMun security services Marivel Asuncion said.

Makati City public information officer chief Joey Salgado said the University of Makati likewise has regular, tenured professors on its staff, though some nonteaching personnel are also hired on contract basis. With Allison B. Lopez and DJ Yap

NCRPO chief vows more police visibility

By Julie M. Aurelio

IF THE NEW TOP COP IN METRO MANILA had his way, his most would be just a short distance away from those working police stations.

Newly installed National Capital Region Police Office head Director Geary Barias yesterday vowed to fight street crimes by bringing the police force's resources down to the precinct level and the barangays.

In turnover ceremonies yesterday at the NCRPO in Camp Bagong Diwa, Taguig City, Barias said he would adopt a "micro operational approach" in lowering the incidence of street crimes in Metro Manila.

"We will utilize our men in the precincts to be able to give the same kind of service we give to residents of posh villages and show areas," the newly appointed regional director said.

The changing of the guard was presided over by Philippine National Police chief Director General Avelino Razon Jr., who announced his post a day earlier.

Razon formerly headed Task Force Usig and also served as director for investigation and detective management and director for comptrollership of the Philippine National Police. Outgoing NCRPO chief Deputy Director General Reynaldo Velle will be assigned as deputy chief for operations of the PNP.

RAINED OUT
A man, his head bowed, walks on Aglian Road in Quezon City to shield his face against a heavy downpour.

NBI to seek UP stude's help on Mendez slay

By Tina G. Santos
and Kristine L. Alave

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIgation will summon for questioning a student of the University of the Philippines who is believed to have been involved in the Sigma Rho fraternity at the same time as suspected hazing victim Cris Aubrey Mendez.

Lawyer Reinaldo Anlo, chief of the NBI Anti-Terrorism Division, identified the student as Andrew Bautista.

"We received information that he was with Mendez and they were among the five neophytes recruited by the fraternity," Anlo told reporters. "We believe Andrew could provide us with vital information."

A UP official, however, earlier told the Inquirer that Bautista joined the fraternity before Mendez did.

Mendez, who is also a UP student, was declared dead on arrival last month in a Quezon City hospital. There were numerous bruises all over his body. An autopsy report confirmed that Mendez had been beaten up badly before his death.

Meanwhile, the mother of a hazing victim yesterday appealed to Sigma Rho fraternity members to come forward if they were in a position to shed light on the death of Mendez.

In an interview with the Inquirer in her Muntinlupa City residence, Constancia, mother of Alexander Miguel Asuncion, said she felt many vital Mendez's murder had yet to be solved for as long as they do not have the "real" criminals.

Asuncion, now a member of the group Children Against Violence, said Sigma Rho members owe it to Cristo Mendez to explain how his son died.

"I don't torture Mrs. Mendez. Her son is already dead and they're still doing this to her," a teary-eyed Asuncion said.

According to Asuncion, Sigma Rho officials should be brave enough to appear before investigators and not actively officials on suspected to the charges against them.

Asuncion's son, a public administration major like Mendez, was an applicant of the Alpha Phi Beta fraternity also based in UP. He died in 1998 while undergoing initiation rites. Four APBs members were eventually convicted for his death and served three years in prison.

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Software piracy is taking from the Philippines' local software industry thousands of jobs, millions in lost wages, tax revenues and investments in new technologies.

It is only now that we have learned of the consequences of using unlicensed software. We encourage businesses to learn from our mistake and get smart about the use of software applications in their business.

(PDI- October 3, 2007)

Makati tops net income list, says COA

By DJ Yap

THE COUNTRY'S FINANCIAL capital yesterday reported posting the highest net income in 2006 among all cities nationwide, citing figures from the Commission on Audit (COA).

"Makati City's net income of P3,150,655,000 topped that of bigger cities, including Quezon City with P2,934,368,000, and Manila with P1,465,509,000," according to a statement issued by the city quoting a recent report by the COA.

Mayor Jejomar Binay attributed the city's sound fiscal performance to its efficient tax collection efforts, partnership to recently introduced systems of "electronic governance and paperless transactions."

"The system allows for greater efficiency, reliability, and transparency which also minimizes human intervention and errors," Binay said in a statement. Under the system, parking taxes in Makati City can take hours just two to four minutes.

The bulk of Makati's collection came from real property taxes worth P1.169 billion and P2.453 billion in business taxes.

DID YOU KNOW

LORENZO Tan, the first Chinese saint, was born in the 1600s in Binondo, Manila, to a Chinese father and a Filipino mother. He served as an altar boy, professional calligrapher and document translator. He was married and had two sons and a daughter.

Tan was forced to leave his abroad after being accused of murder. The ship he was on arrived in Japan during a time of intense Christian persecution there and he and his companions were arrested and taken to Nagasaki, where they were tortured for days. He was killed in September 1637 after refusing to renounce his faith.

Tan was beatified in 1981 by Pope John Paul II and was canonized six years later.

Cyril L. Jocelyn, Inquirer Research

METRO

Citizen's Call

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INQUIRER

METRO BRIEFS

2 shot dead

A LAWYER was murdered yesterday after he shot two people dead following a traffic altercation. Pasay police chief Supt. Frank Ignacio identified the suspect as lawyer Manuel Hernandez Jr., a lawyer working at the Pasay City Hall legal department. Ignacio said Hernandez was angered when a Mercury Drug van bumped off as he was driving on San Rozas St. corner Shaw Boulevard in Pasig City. The driver of the Cobo, identified as Edgardo Castanera, reportedly yelled at Hernandez, who took his cool and shot him and his passenger, Castanera. Palmares, authorities. A man gun. Castanera and Palmares were killed while the suspect was arrested.

Kristine L. Alave

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Guieb

UN envoy meets Burma's leaders

RANGOON—UN SPECIAL ENVOY IBRAHIM Gambari met with Burma's (Myanmar's) democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi and junta leader Than Shwe on Tuesday, intervening after a bloody crackdown on an anti-government uprising.

The Nigerian-born diplomat dazzled between the regime's remote capital of Naypyidaw, where the ruling generals are talking out the crisis, and the main city Rangoon, where thong fans from Kyi to being held under house arrest.

Gambari has received the green to see the turbulent Than Shwe, and separate global embassy after seven key forces put down protests led by Buddhist monks, leaving at least 13 dead and more than 1,000 arrested.

After the meeting, he joined to Rangoon, where he spent 35 minutes with Aung San Suu Kyi at the ordinary guesthouse where he also saw her for more than an hour on Monday, an official said.

The envoy then headed to the airport in Rangoon, where he was expected to board a flight to Singapore, witnesses said.

THAN SHWE

GAMBARI

The top-level talks came as activists struggled to assess the scope of the crackdown and to locate hundreds of detainees, monks and ordinary civilians who were arrested or have gone missing.

UN and junta officials told AFP that at least 1,000 people have been detained at the Government Technical Institute campus in Rangoon.

Yoriko Kawaguchi, Asia regional director for the UN World Food Program, said he was concerned at reports that the detainees, including some 300 monks, were now being moved to another location, heightening fears for their welfare.

A Burmese official talking on condition of anonymity said that up to 1,700 people had been detained at the campus, including about 200 women and at least one child, a novice monk believed to be 10 years old.

They were being kept inside a windowless warehouse, where the monks have been shorn and many of them were refusing to eat, he added. AFP

Sharp dip in Arctic ice seen

WASHINGTON—ARCTIC SEA ice declined this year to the lowest levels engineered since satellite measurements started in the 1970s, extending a trend fueled by human-caused global warming, scientists said on Monday.

Sea ice declined by so much this year that the typically ice-clogged Northwest Passage, allowing vessels to sail from the Atlantic to the Pacific, completely opened for the first time since the record was kept, the researchers said.

Scientists at the US National Snow and Ice Data Center, part of the University of Colorado at Boulder, measure Arctic sea ice during the annual melt season beginning in March and ending in September.

The average sea ice extent for September, when ice is at its lowest quantities, slipped to 4.28 million square kilometers, breaking by nearly a quarter the previous record low for the month set two years ago, the scientists said.

"Overall there's been a steep and significant downward trend since we've been getting good satellite data starting in 1979," Mark Meier, one of the scientists studying Arctic sea ice for the data center, said in a telephone interview. Reuters

Security alert up vs toys with remotes at airports

WASHINGTON—CITING "CREDible specific information" about terror tactics, Transportation Security Administration officers nationwide on Monday stepped up their scrutiny of passengers carrying remote-control toys aboard airplanes.

The move was not mentioned by a specific terror plot, said Rip Hawley, the assistant secretary at the Department of Homeland Security in charge of aviation security. But there is concern both in the United States and internationally that common remote-control toys could be used to detonate explosives as part of a terror plot.

The aviation authorities decided against banning the devices to carry-on bags. But people carrying remote-control toys—including children—could be subject to a more intense search, to which the passenger is patted down and the baggage is checked by hand, officials said. *New York Times News Service*

Britney Spears loses custody of kids

LOS ANGELES—POP STAR Britney Spears on Monday lost custody of her two sons after a sexy-looking pair highly publicized court battle with ex-husband Kevin Federline.

Federline "is to retain physical custody of the minor children on Wednesday Oct. 3, 2007 at 12 p.m., until further order of the court," Judge Scott Gordon wrote in his court order.

Celebrity website TMZ and E!? said Spears took her sons to the drive-through window of a fast food restaurant before handing them over to Federline's bodyguards shortly after noon on Monday.

The divorce between Spears, 25, and Federline, 29, became final at the end of July, but their temporary shared custody arrangement for their sons has unveiled amid allegations from Federline's camp that Spears was an unfit mother.

Gordon on Sept. 19 ordered Spears to undergo random drug testing in the latest twist in the bitter custody battle seen from Britney, 2, and Jayden James, 1.

Gordon said at the time that according to evidence presented in closed-door hearings, Spears was

SPEARS

a "habitual, frequent, and consistent" user of "controlled substances and alcohol," court documents showed. AFP

WORLD BRIEFS

Israel releases 57 Palestinians

JERUSALEM—Israel freed 57 Palestinian prisoners on Wednesday, all members of the Fatah party, to reach officials said, as a gesture to bolster the Palestinian Authority President, Mahmoud Abbas (Yasser Arafat). But the planned release of 256 other prisoners from the Gaza Strip, where the militant group Hamas, the rival Palestinian faction, holds sway, was delayed until Tuesday. The Israeli Cabinet had approved the release of about 450 prisoners last week, in part to mark the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. The inclusion of prisoners from Fatah, which Hamas has controlled since violent clashes with Fatah in June, was treated "to encourage the moderates in Gaza as well," a government spokesperson, David Baker, said at the time. AFP

Putin wants to be PM

MOSCOW—Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Monday he would run for parliament and had a "realistic" chance of becoming prime minister. It's a shock announcement that could reshape fundamental things on the way Russia is governed. "I gratefully accept your proposal to lead the United Russia list," Putin told a pro-election congress of the party of power, United Russia, bringing hundreds of delegates to their feet with a roar of applause. Putin said that if the party triumphed in the Dec. 2 vote and assembly nominated him, he would be president in 2008. He could become prime minister. AFP

10 killed, hurt in Kabul blast

KABUL—A suicide attacker blew himself up in a police station in the Afghan capital Kabul on Tuesday, killing or wounding at least 10 people, most of them with the police force, officials and witnesses said. The attack—similar to one four days ago that killed CIE defense ministry staff in the city—blew out the sides of his vehicle and ripped off part of the roof. Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid said the insurgent militia was responsible for the main blast blast in the far west of the city. The number of dead and wounded was not immediately clear. AFP

Iraq civilian deaths cut 50 percent

BAGHDAD—Civilian deaths from violence across Iraq fell 50 percent in September, in line with a drop in US military casualties attributed to a boost in troop numbers, Iraq government data showed on Wednesday. Information from the health, interior and defense ministries registered 856 civilians killed in September, the lowest monthly total this year down from 1,773 in August. The casualties were also the lowest since Washington began counting on each 28,000 troops into Iraq as part of a security crackdown announced at Congress and other Sunni Arab militants and Shiite militias across the country. Reuters

Pakistan opposition MPs quit

ISLAMABAD—Pakistan opposition MPs staged a mass resignation on Tuesday in protest at military ruler President Pervez Musharraf's tactics and another four-year term in power. More than 80 MPs in calls on Saturday's crunch presidential vote. Meanwhile filed new petitions in the Supreme Court challenging the way US ally is eligible to stand for reelection. More than 80 opposition MPs backed by hundreds of flag-waving supporters chanting "Go, Musharraf Go!" marched to parliament, where they submitted their resignations to the speaker of the national assembly, or lower house. AFP

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SMART

SPORTS

Editor Rodolfo S. Mendoza Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Ochoa

NATIONAL BOXFEST: Carlo Gianni of Davao del Norte (right) issues jones Cabagnigan of Tagbilaran City to the punch during their light pinweight bout in the Smart National Amateur Boxing Championships at the Provincial Capitol Compound in Cagayan de Oro City (correction: Cabagnigan won. (Story on page A37)

Pacquiao hits Las Vegas for final training

By Norah Trinidad

LAS VEGAS—MANNY PACQUIAO, YEAR of the shirts, got a flat, seamlessunsle reception here when he walked into the lobby of the host hotel Monday night but it's his opponent, Marco Antonio Barrera, who's on for a rude welcome.

There were a few noticed hollers, hold up by a small group of Filipinos who were plainly glad to see their idol, when Pacquiao arrived.

"Forget about him, buddy. Pacquiao will knock him out, that's for sure," blurted Hayne Saunders, valet parking attendant, as he pumped his right hand.

He didn't have to be asked, but with the hot approval for Pacquiao prevailing in this mill-in gaming capital, Saunders found the hating of the anti-Barrera sentiment the smartest thing to do.

Pacquiao and his entourage of around 30 people hit the glittering Strip area as scheduled in a first-class scenery, including a 14-seat van, at 9 p.m. Monday, after a five-hour drive from Los Angeles.

Filipino John Pelletier was surprised to learn that Pacquiao was already in the hotel.

"We're all for him, but we could not find anybody here to bet against," the barber of the late Jimmy Pelletier in the 1960s explained.

All the Pacquiao fit knew around here were all for Pacquiao, drained the tall lobby atmosphere with a well modulated voice.

To make up for the cold reception, Manalo Bay, host of the 9th in Wild card, has lined up elaborate greetings for Pacquiao. This day, before the scheduled media workout for the Filipino boxing superstar.

Although it was not clear if Barrera had climbed in, the Mexican boxing legend has been scheduled to shadow-box before manhandled the pressure Sibelmanday.

Pacquiao emphasized on speed in Pacquiao's final workout at Wild Card yesterday that included four rounds of sparring and an unscheduled rush with the heavy bags.

"I don't want him to be too tight," trainer Freddie Roach said of his prized warrior who his said has visibly hit peak form ahead.

Pacquiao himself assured there was nothing to fear about a possible hot seat.

"Mas mauga lang nakaako ang kondisyon," PACQUIAO AT

Ababa powers RP to 6th in Nomura

JOSIEL ABABA SHOT A ONE-OVER-PAR 73 yesterday as the Philippines assembled a 22B total for ninth place after 18 holes of the 22nd Nomura Cup at the wind-swept Sunrise Golf and Country Club in Taipei.

The total this product of the National Caddies' Open was the best Filipino scorer with the usually steady Mark Fernando only managing a 76 like Rodilo Austria under rough playing conditions.

Junior Ryan Lam, a 19-year-old first time internationalist, shot a 75 and did not count.

Ababa was tied for fifth in the individual race being paced by Korean Ji Ok Kim and Hsiang Lee who posted 71s.

Taiwan's Nadia Cellapan and Malaysia's Hazny Rasnican assembled identical 72s for third in the event also known as the Asia Pacific championship.

SIX TO baseed the Koreans to a leading 228 aggregate, two ahead of the Japanese and Southern two shots in front of rock-solid New Zealand.

Australia and Thailand later identical 22Se for a fourth place tie.

The Philippines finished fifth in the last staging of this event two years ago and was playing captain Caley Concebello said the respectable start was enough reason for the country to expect a better performance in Taipei.

"I have never seen a golf course with winds like this," said Concebello of the tough conditions in a test message to the bayonet.

Concebello took a hastily formed team to Taipei after the NGAD's eyeshade backout. ICTH pulled out its players from the RP Team at the last minute.

Manong C. Cuello

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Pacquiao could win by repeating himself

LAS VEGAS—MANNY PACQUIAO, a marvelous lefty boxer, a great right hand when he uses one.

He had a full, bright view of that right punch on Saturday.

He also saw a few friendly dollars bringing cheerful punch.

The deadly shot was thrown by Kelly Pavlik, who knows as The Ghost, to his world middleweight title fight against the unreformed Jermain Taylor.

* * *

Before we go further, it must be noted that the punch that unmannerly Pacquiao into putting a fighter who was clearly on the losing end, was not that lionizing baseball hurl of a facial chaos Taylor received with disfiguring, devastating impact in the seventh round.

No, it was another one, although practically of the same edition:

* * *

It's like this: Taylor floored Pavlik in the second round and was highly in mood to finish the job in the third.

Suddenly his right went, downfast, amidst just enough to help him stay down.

Pavlik, on Pacquiao round'er expected ahead, went on to stop Taylor in the seventh.

* * *

It was not a exactly a big killing Pacquiao made.

But the take massive been big enough to buy a gift for his husband buddy and trainer Rodney Bastamkhet, who celebrated his birthday yesterday.

* * *

Linen phone license you missed that great right hand, here's a tip.

If you come to visit at Wild Card, there's a replica of that great right punch on a torn-out newspaper page pasted on the right side of the entrance.

And the one hitting with the baseball bat, to its gory impact, was Manny Dariquiao himself.

This happened in the Pacman's first fight with Marco Antonio Barrera, whom he stopped in 2003.

* * *

No need to repeat that Pacquiao, before leaving for this city, was seen several afternoons perfecting his right hand.

Pacquiao, a left-handed original, is definitely no copycat.

But, going by the trend, it wasn't comic as a surprise if he copies the Pavlik right shot against Barrera here on Saturday (Sunday morning in Manila).

Instead, the effort wasn't necessary to plagiarism.

Pacquiao, if he scores that big, killer right again, would simply be repeating himself.

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

Olympic crack for RP jins in Vietnam

By Marc Anthony Reyes

MANCHESTER, ENGLAND—EVEN BEfore leaving this city, the Philippine netsetting jins have already set their eyes on Vietnam.

As soon as they hit home, the three RP bets who blew their bid in the World Taekwondo Olympic Qualifying tournament will buckle down to work and prepare for another crack at the Beijing 2008 Olympics via the Asian Qualifying event, according to the Philippine Taekwondo Association.

Vietnam Go again nailed an Olympic slot through the world qualifying here, duplicating Sin Jose in 2004.

"We are happy with the bronze we know it's never going to be easy," said PTA executive vice president Bong Hong Chua.

As proof of the tough competition, Spain and Thailand, both powered by World and Asian champions, failed to produce an Olympic qualifier over the weekend.

In separate bouts, Kiana won in four of four, while Chinese Taipei won 2-of-4.

Each country is allowed a maximum of four jins—two men and two women—in the eight Olympic categories.

In the Asian Qualifying for the 2000 Sydney Olympics held in Manila, the Philippines managed to qualify four through Donald Geisler, Merlie Dizon, member Sonchan and Roberto Cruz, one head of the men's team.

Four years later, Go squeezed into the Athens Olympic roster by winning a bronze in the Hanoi Worlds, while Hwa teammate Rivera and Geisler made it via the Asian selection held in Thailand.

Rivera, Alexander Serrano and Kathleen Ramirez then failed to keep up with Go here but they can still earn slots in the Vietnam qualifying meeting Nov. 29.

The RP jins, rated highly along with the bronze in the country's bid to win a first Olympic gold, are also busy preparing for the Southeast Asian Taekwondo Union on Oct. 10-15 in Mcronesia and the SEA Games in Thailand in December.

DINDO Pumaren: Expect 40 minutes of hell from DE.

HANG Pumaren: We place emphasis on defense.

PUMAREN VS PUMAREN

We're the same, we're different

By Jasmine W. Payo

MOMS THOSE JUST A HAIRCUT HELPS, THE 2007 UAAP Finals will be a testament to the winning systems of Rob Feund of basketball brothers.

The Pumaren siblings—Franz of La Salle and younger brother Dindo of University of the East—will go to the best-of-three championship series vowing another game strategies that have revolutionized local collegiate basketball.

"If you're going to dissect the team profile, one thing you'll notice that.... there's discipline," said Franz of his Green Archers. "We [place] emphasis on defense. The players know their respective roles. There are no superstars in our team."

"We've always used personnel and well-organized," said Dindo of the Tamaraws. "Our defense can raise our offense. The emphasis in college basketball is to have the most number of possessions. Our basketball is [giving the enemy] 40 minutes of hell."

Franz and Dindo may try to outwit each other using familiar plays, but both plan to throw in surprises at their own.

"If you remember it, there's a difference [in style]," Franz said during the PBA Press Corps Chairman's Cup opening. "Looking [from] outside, you will say what we're doing is almost the same. We have different philosophies lately. We adjust [according to the enemies that we have. There's a variation, I guess. But what's always the same is the aggressive pressuring defense."

On his "football strategy," Dindo said: "We have evaluated teams. From our second group we mind. Our players' playing strengths are well-balanced. So our plays more than [on] 2 [offensive]. Unlike [in the] first key players average about 25 to 30 minutes."

Neither credit their successful systems to their father Pito and older brother Derick, who also steered Talk 'N Text to the PBA Finals to the last conference.

Before Franz took over in 1998, Derick announced the strikers from 1988 to 1991, a stint highlighted by back-to-back titles in 1989 and 1990.

And before Dindo in 2000, Derick steered UE back to the spotlight, Pito rallied the shots for the Warriors, who bagged the UAAP championship in 1973, 1976 and 1979.

"Mandatory aside, I think the program that I put up at La Salle—whether the other schools will agree or not—became the barometer of college basketball," Franz said in the forum sponsored by Pagcor and Shakey's Pizza Asia. "The reason [is] that we've consistently in the top four every year is already a validation of the program."

GIRL THOUGHT
Dindo Cabanal
Up to — time after
Dad or Uncle
Dante I.
best of three finals

Task force doubts Figueroa scores

By Jane Navarro

THE INCLUSION OF FORMER Olympian Jacinto Figueroa in the Southeast Asian Games roster is under scrutiny.

Figueroa was asked to undergo a series of tryouts by the SEAG Task Force due to what it said was a dubious score by the 2004 Athens Olympic Games campaigner during a qualifying test conducted by the National Archery Association of the Philippines.

"There was no formal notice of the tryout so the task force decided to conduct a special shoot-out two months from now (for Jacinto) to see if (he really) should be in the delegation," SEAG Task Force deputy chief Mark Joseph told the barracks.

Figueroa, who failed to win a SEAG medal in the 2005 Manila Games, surpassed the qualifying mark of 101 points by scoring 105 in the try-out conducted by the NAAP last July.

The swimming chief said POC Commissioner Ricardo Garcia, who monitors the progress of the archery team in the task force, has raised serious doubts on the integrity of the NAAP tryout.

Prior to the NAAP-supervised tryout, Figueroa missed only 37 in the women's recurve event of the Asian Archery Championships held in Xian, China, last month, one of the qualifying tournaments for the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Categorized as a Class A athlete, Figueroa rated a win during the Athens Olympics by beating the world champion in one match. She failed to win a medal in the Olympics and SEA Games

FIGUEROA

Tuason Racing drivers 1-2 in Touring Car

TUASON RACING MAINSTAYS STUART MacDonald and Jeep Bautista dethroned the opposition by finishing 1-2 in the fifth leg of the 2007 Philippine Touring Car Championship (PTCC) series held recently at the Subic International Raceway.

The duo inched back ecstatic drivers in the Group 3 division to deliver the first major victory for the Tuason Racing team.

The win was achieved despite new team confidence and the fact that their Ford Focus vehicle is heavier than the Honda Civic units that most drivers used.

"We're thrilled with the performance of the whole team headed by team manager Michael Tuason," said Chris Dang, sales and marketing AVP of Ford Group Philippines.

Other members of the victorious Tuason team were chief engineer Pedro Bautista and chief mechanic Peter Gabon.

MacDonald, a British expatriate who finished runners-up in the opening race, held on to the lead all throughout the all-session session to snap Alvin Sentico' nine-race winning streak.

Bautista, scoring action for only the second time this season, managed to hold briefly in the lead but eventually wound up second to MacDonald.

Sentico, who still lead the race for rookie honors, made several tries to slip past MacDonald, even going for a desperate dive in the fourth lap. But his attempt backfired as he hit MacDonald's back fender and the damaged car his car forced him out of the race.

STUART MacDonald (car No. 27) edges Alvin Sentico for fastest major victory of the season.

The losing showed down MacDonald a lot, allowing Bautista to temporarily take the lead.

S. Lucia Tour bets tackle Bangkok course today

BANGKOK, THAILAND—IT'S GOING TO BE AN entirely different experience for SM club members here when they compete in the Sta. Lucia Tour today and tomorrow in two different courses here.

Host city play at the Thailand Golf Club designed by golf great Gary Player. Sta. Lucia for members of clubs flying in banner spikes the huge field into two. The championship Class A and Class B entries play the Lam Luklea course and the Class C and Class D bets tackle the Lakewood layout.

The players switch courses tomorrow in what promises to be an exciting team and individual showdown in an unfamiliar intelligence among members of some of the country's most popular golf clubs.

The 108-strong roster is believed to be the largest group of Philippine club members sanctioned to play a golf tournament abroad. Though there are a few foreign expatriates in the cast, more than 90 percent of those who come here are Filipinos.

Represented in the tournament sponsored by Insurance, Callaway, Philippine Airlines and Thai Airways are Sta. Mesa of Cebu, Eagle Ridge of Cavite, Sahara and of Calamba area, Orchard of Cavite, Riviera Hills Residential Estate and Hyatt Regency and Sonesta Hotels of Batangas.

Alta Mesa is the defending four champion, prevailing over Baler Verdes and Eagle Ridge in a season-opening series played over five seasons last year.

The Cebuanos have come to Thailand in full force, fielding the biggest lineup of 36 golfers.

SPORTSWATCH

Antonio regains No. 1

GRANDMASTER ROSELLE "JOEY" Antonio regained his No. 1 position among the country's three players based on the revised World Chess Federation (Fide) ratings released Oct. 1.

Antonio improved his Fide ratings (2681 from 2680) during the July 2007 list to displace Fide-No.2 IM Eugene Torre, who slid from 2678 to 2677.

World Junior championship campaigner IM Wesley So also made a big jump from 2576 in the previous list to 2591, edging GM Mark Paragua, who dropped to 2591 from 2589.

The biggest gain was made by newly anointed GM Darwin Laylo, who moved up to 89th place with an Elo of 2568 from 2486.

Laylo, who secured his GM title during the recent Asian Individual Championship and qualified for the World Chess Cup in Khanty-Mansiysk, Russia, next month, was removed from the list during his six-month suspension for his alleged involvement in betting-fixing controversy last year. He was put back in the list following his strong performance at the 11-round Asian tournament. Abe Alcuaz

Tanauan Open up Oct. 12

THE P200,000 TANAUAN OPEN, 12th edition event of the 2007 Calabarzon Chess festival, comes off the wraps on Oct. 12 to 14 at the Tanauan gym in Tanauan City, Batangas.

The country's leading players, led by Grandmasters Rogelio Antonio Jr. and Eugene Torre, have confirmed their participation in the nine-round tournament.

For inquiries, call Bgd Fidel Menandrino at 883-4610 and 882-6463 or text 0920-9021108.

Olivarez triumphs

STA. ROSA, LAGUNA—JED OLIVAREZ whipped Jamie Galvayan, 6-3, 6-1, in the venue 15 summer showdown in Tuesday's open-age semi-elimination of the 2007 Nike Junior Tennis Cup over the weekend at the Sta. Rosa Sports Center adjacents here—to earn a shot at the Malaysia grand finals.

Olivarez thus qualified for the National Finals together with Mark Sopsop, Zhee Salabsalab and Mendoza Ramos.

Fast-moving Tacuyan son shocks Tipon in nat'l meet

By Dennis Erasa
Inquirer Libre Sports Editor

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—TALL AND FAST, Orlando Tacuyan Jr. of Angeles City scored the biggest win of his young career as he shocked Dona Asiancy Garnet gold medalist Jose Tipon, 20-24, in the Senior National Boxing Open last Monday here.

Due to weight problems, Tipon, also a gold medalist in the 2005 Manila Southeast Asian Games, was forced to fight not in a lightmiddleweight but in a featherweight and dispersed unanimous against Tacuyan, the determining son of former national champion and superfeatherweight Jessel in Camp Crame.

A member of the national training pool, the 18-year-old, 5-foot-7 Tacuyan used his longer reach to pile up points to the delight of the ecstatic followers of the Misamis Oriental Capitol.

Obviously tired, Tipon failed to overhaul the deficit as Tacuyan danced away from trouble.

"Masaya po ako dahil kahit papano, nakabawi po ako sa kanya (Tipon). Oks happy because I got even with him," said Tacuyan.

It was the first victory for Tacuyan in three meetings with Tipon.

Manny Lopez, president of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines, said the duo "should be a make-up-call for him (Tipon), that he can be beaten by upcoming boxers."

Tacuyan noted that Tipon was tired after losing in the finals of last week's ranking tournament in Czech Republic in Hungarian David Olivarpi.

Tacuyan, who has been with the national training pool for four years, now looms as a gold medal prospect in the weakling reservation owing as performances last by BBMP for upcoming pool members.

Also advancing were Roy Jone (Zigzon-ity), Emerson Marcos (Bukidnon) and Virgil Bonifer (Misamis Oriental) in the 57 kg class.

Also advancing in the 51 kg category were Philippine Army's Gladdy Ryan Pada, Frederick Bedegora of Mabalyahag, Bukidnon and Ethel Mandato (Cebu City).

Pada, also a gold medalist in Doha, pressed on strong against Calixto, Davao City's Wilbert Apas, producing the quickest victory for the night... a referee stopped contest due to injury, with still 1:46 minutes to go in the first round, while Mandato over Ben Saludar of Davao Del Norte II in the same fashion—an RSC due to body blows, with still 1:47 to go in the second round.

Rockies advance to NL playoffs by a run

WINNING PLAY! Colorado's Matt Holliday hears San Diego catcher Michael Barrett as scores the winning run that sent the Rockies straight into the playoffs.

NEW YORK—THE COLORADO Rockies rallied for three runs in a rousing 13th inning to beat the San Diego Padres, 8-5, in a National League wild-card thriller and advance to the playoffs on Monday.

Jamey Carroll's sacrifice fly to right field drove home Matt Holliday to send the celebrating Rockies to the NL Division Series playoffs against the Phillies in Philadelphia beginning on Wednesday.

The win was the 14th in 15 games for Colorado, which had fallen behind, 5-1, in the top of the 12th on Scott Hairston's two-run homer by San Diego.

Kazuo Matsui doubled to deep right center to begin the Rockies' rally. Troy Tulowitzki drew him home with a double to deep center to narrow San Diego's advantage to 6-7.

Holliday then tripled to deep right to tie the score at 8-8.

After Todd Helton was intentionally walked, Carroll's sacrifice fly to right completed the Rockies's wild ride to the postseason.

Mets meltdown

The Rockies meet a Phillies squad that finished the postseason because of a major New York Mets meltdown of historic proportions that sent the New Yorkers tumbling out of the postseason picture.

And the disastrous effort could include a choke up at Shea Stadium.

The Mets let a seven-game lead slip through their fingers in their last 17 games of the season by going 5-12, including two five-game losing streaks. They were 1-6 at home in the final week.

"This is big boy," manager Willie Randolph told reporters after Sunday's 8-1 loss to the last-place Florida Marlins finished off the Mets. "I know how things work. I know I'm accountable for my job." Reuters

NBA PRESEASON

Garnett battles T'wolves

NEW YORK—KEVIN GARNETT, Randy Gamett vs. the Timberwolves—for Landmark.

Two months after making the Minnesota Basketball Association's biggest offseason trade, Boston and Minnesota will meet in one of the featured games on the NBA Europe Live Tour.

The Memphis Grizzlies and Toronto Raptors also are fielding training camps and will play exhibition games overseas, giving European stars such as Pau Gasol and Andrea Bargnani the chance to play in front of their home fans.

Games are also scheduled in Turkey, Rome and Spain, with NBA rosters matched against a European club in four of them. The game between Minnesota and Boston is getting the most attention in the United States.

"It's probably going to be a lot of emotions because of the guys that have been traded," Boston's Paul Pierce said. "So it's probably going to mean more to them than it does to me, as they've been traded. But still be interesting as there are going to be a lot of new guys."

The Timberwolves traded Garnett, their longtime superstar, to the Celtics in a 7-for-1 trade—the most players swapped for one player in NBA history. And Minnesota coach Randy Wittman thinks it's going to be apparent to figure out which of them can play their trying to cop Garnett in the Oct. 31 game.

"Everybody is going to build that up as a huge game because of the kinds of bonds Kevin formed in Boston, but I can't look at it that way," Wittman said. "I wouldn't give myself and my teammates a service if I am going to play five guys to win the game when I've got to figure out the makeup of my team. That's what exhibition games and practice are for."

Al Jefferson, Ryan Gomes, Gerald Green, Theo Ratliff and Sebastian Telfair are the former Celtics on the Minnesota roster. The Wolves play the first game of the tour Saturday in Istanbul against Turkish team Efes Pilsen, whose coach, American David Blatt, led Russia to a surprising title at the European championships. AP

EIGHT year-old Dylan Penn jumps over his journalism career during the Golden State Warriors' media day. Penn, getting a lift—literally—from photographer's brother, interviews Golden State's Jason Richardson.

Pacquiao . . .

From page A23

pave seeking depot decided (I hit my peak early, but it's just perfect)," Dequino explained during a brief break in his final workout in Los Angeles.

"I trained my ashiger for some fellow so (I'm excited) already. I hope it's fight time!" he told a television interviewer.

There was no outright manifestation of distance over the stomach, but it's safe to say Jose would have more endurance if a younger, stronger Pac has tortured been fired up against Barquino, who four years ago had knocked out Barrera in Texas.

Dequino is enjoying his beautiful summer in hosting, while Barrera, if not exactly encouraging, is closely in the last quarter of his career.

"I'm picking Dequino to win it for reasons rounds one to seven," former sen. ator Robert Jaworski told the Inquirer after dropping by Dequino's training camp in LA yesterday.

Jaworski however said things could just turn mysterious in scoring if the fight lasts 12 rounds.

"A lot of humor is to make, so we can never tell," Jaworski, looking thin in light blue long-sleeved shirt, explained.

He will be at ringside, together with other celebrities and politicians from the Philippines, on Saturday.

NBC president Padilla welcomes American reinforcement McDaniel as second import Steven Rivers and other members of the NBC Spring Cooking Oil team look on.

NBC five plays Japan today

SEA GIRL, TAIWAN—THE NATIONAL Basketball Conference (NBC) Selection opens its campaign in the annual Nestle Pro Cup Peninsula Basketball Invitational here tomorrow against at 11:30 a.m. today.

Bottled up by 6-foot-3 hometown Michael Anthony Daniel and 6-9 Australian Steven Rivers and composed of NBC's top performers, the JIP squad is optimistic of doing well in the tournament.

Other members of the team coached by Boyet Gaviz are Marlon Ambos, Don Villarosa, Mike Swain, Larry Rodriguez, Jeff Tiptoona and reserve Nino Marquez, Marlon Lagapi, Nelson Asoyman and RJ Bell.

The NBC cagers are headlined in Group B with Japan, local club Tiende and Manila and USA Infinity Athletes.

Making up Group A are Taiwan Hwa, Pu Yuan, Yokos, Kyung Hee and Malaysia.

The teams will play one round, with the top finishers clashing in the finals.

The NBC cagers in action will meet ENA at 1:30 p.m. tomorrow, Uncle at 2:30 on Oct. 5 and Hwa at 11:30 on Oct. 6. The finals and consolation games will be played on Oct. 7.

NBC president and Spring Cooking Oil team owner Nicholas "Tac" Padilla is confident that the addition of quality imports "would help the team succeed after narrowly missing the finals two years ago."

In 2005, an all-Filipino NBC squad led by Jaworski Ensan and NU Cazadero dropped a close decision to the European-backed Jumeal for the No. 3 spot in their group.

Padilla and league MVP and Tiapoon player Ronnel Tolentino headed the trip of the team headed by ace guy Tito Pelaez.

Hechanova tops Masters Challenge

EDDIE HECHANOVA, LAGUNA PR PRACTICE and all, claimed overall low golf prize honors in the recent 11th Masters Challenge at the Masters course of the Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club in Cavite.

Busy in his job as general manager of the Camp Aguinaldo Golf Club in Taguig City, Hechanova said he played games in his island.

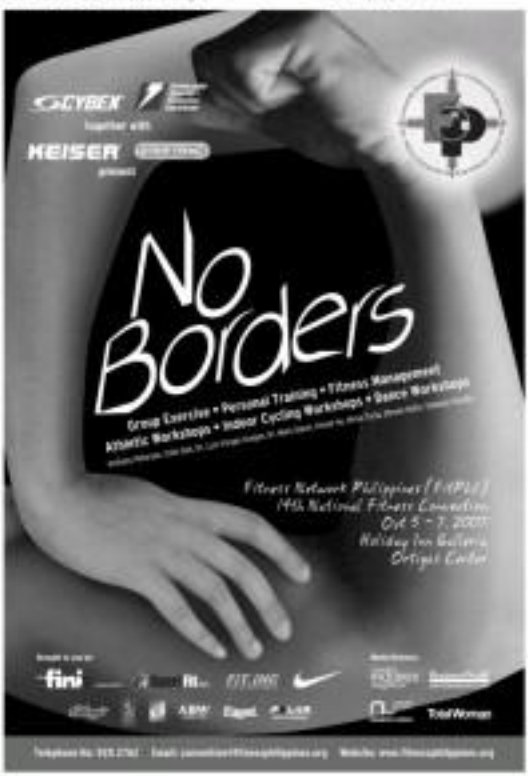
It worked as Hechanova, over after 15 holes, outdistanced Inquirer on Nos. 12 and 17 with scrambles on No. 18 for a one-over-par 73.

He bested Bandaloz Barangkat who also carded a 73 but had a higher handicap.

Jason Ye and Tony Lin took the title in the men's Division 1 and 2, respectively, in the one-day, four-ball-stroke event organized by the Manila Southwoods Ladies Chapter.

Ranah Imperial (Ladies 1), Jenny Gee (Ladies 2), Hanna See (Ladies 3) and Ruby Amatar (Guests) were the other winners. Emer Atienza topped the Passports-Nike shoot game challenge and won a Nike Golf outfit.

No one won any of the hole-in-one prizes that included a Chery Car from Autohub, a pearl set from Jewelmer, a Royal Caribbean cruise and a stay in Boracay's Phips Aqua Resort.



Toni spurns offer to ride for Qatar

By Jasmine M. Payo

LEVISTE

THE PHILIPPINES HEARD LAST DAY OF ITS final equestrianism.

Asian Games veteran Toni Leviste politely turned down an offer by Qatari head of state, Sheikh Mohamad Al Thani, to join the Qatar national equestrian team recently.

"He wanted me to give out a Qatari citizenship because the Qatari team is composed of men," she said in a press conference Monday. "The Qatari team is the strongest in the world in terms of financial support.

"In fact, they're the only team 100-percent supported by their royalty. Of course, if I agreed to do it, I would not have to do what I'm doing now (look for financial support) to be able to continue."

But national pride prevailed for Leviste, the only Southeast Asian rider to compete in the Olympics, World Championships and World Cup Finals.

"To be honest, I was tempted," she said. "One, it's an honor. Two, what a great privilege to do what you love and not worry where the funds will be coming from. I can concentrate on training, to better myself and to be on top of the game.

"But where I go in there and (take me down) the Qatari flag, it will mean nothing to me. There will be no passion to what I do if I'm riding under another flag. It will be meaningless."

Leviste plans to compete aboard Swedish mare Ulrike Phalmann Jost Amein in the Asia League circuit early next year to earn qualifying points for the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

But the charming equestrian has also set her focus to help defend the Philippine team's gold medal in the SEA Games in November.

"As equestrians, the older you are, the better you become; so this is my prime," she said.

Doves, Lightnings forge title clash

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI COLLEGE GOT timely baskets in the extra period to oust defending champion Emilio Aguinaldo College, 76-68, in their sixth Collegiate Basketball League Athletic Association (CBAA) basketball semifinal clash at The Arena in San Juan.

The Doves set up a best-of-three finals battle with the Asians College of Science and Technology Lightnings starting on Saturday.

Leomar Sanoy paced the Doves with 20 points, including a driver and a triple at the start of the overtime period.

Asian Intel Lee Pihan Collegio, 85-81, on Monday to bag the first finals slot.

SEAOIL Provides True Value for the Price-conscious Motorist

In this financially upcoming time in our country's economy, many consumers continue to tighten their belts in searching their hard-earned money as they avoid making unnecessary expenses, and instead give more importance to their basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter which make up the bulk of what Filipinos make out of on a daily basis, whether they take public transportation, or use their own vehicles.

With the rising cost of gasoline and providing the proper care and maintenance for their vehicles being of primary concern, many motorists have resulted to various ways of getting the most value for their money, without sacrificing the much desired mileage and protection for their engines that they usually get from their preferred lubricant brand.

Putting their customers' satisfaction first, SEAOIL introduces a cocoon of innovation to meet the highest Automotive Engine Oil (Engine) standards of motorcycle engine specifications, and to provide superior engine protection and performance under the most demanding conditions, the SEAOIL 4T POWER 4-Stroke Motor Oil.

The 4T POWER Motor Oil is a blend of high quality detergent base stocks and performance chemistry additives specially formulated for high-revving, high-stress and high temperature 4-stroke motorcycle engines. It also features advanced engine protection properties, specially formulated additives to prevent sludge build-up and high thermal stability for superior performance over those of same 4-stroke engine oils.

Aside from lubrication and protection, 4T Power has special components that keep your engine clean and free of unwanted deposits, for superior engine performance and performance.

And to get absolute value from their lubricant and petroleum products, SEAOIL has also come up with a promo that's the perfect solution for the price-conscious motorist, in that effort to deliver generous discounts for their gas and diesel products that gives true value for all SEAOIL 3-Liter products.

To avail of the Langisulit promo, customers must purchase one liter or gallon of any participating SEAOIL Lubricants such as 4T Power, DEO Supreme, DEO Max, DEO MOTO, 4000 4M/20W50, DEO 2000 SAE 40/30 and 2T XP. Customers will then receive a coupon with corresponding discounts on their gasoline and diesel purchases, namely: P5.00 Gasoline, P 3.00 Diesel, Premium Diesel and Auto Gas/Cetane. The coupons can be instantly redeemed at the SEAOIL stations where the purchase was made, as they can be collected for bigger discounts.

Hurry and avail of this great offer from SEAOIL at the Langisulit promo that runs from October 1 to December 31, 2007. For more information, see posters and print ads, or visit the SEAOIL Station nearest you.

SPORTS WATCH

SJC stagfest Round 2 today

THE SECOND ROUND of the 2M Racing Sports & Shag/Swing kicks off at 2 p.m. at the San Juan College (with some 80 fights booked by Inquisitor Complex in 2006. Last Monday's mound was dominated by Butchey Chatto, Hag Gomez, "Pep" Pagtama, Jun Manglicmot, Manny Garcia, Allan Chan and Rodolfo Pineda who tallied three wins each. Disqualified Jun is PEJOC the university for all PHAROL and hosts Dave Mendoza, Boy Torres and Doc Jong.

Makati T-stag derby slated

THE #1 CLUBHOUSE and development Corp. presents the "Kingdom Sabjakan" T-stag derby on Oct. 24 at the Makati Coliseum. All participants must field all seven stags in one ride. Entries are to Kate Assembling bodyprotectors (Jo Del Ilza, Rudy Salud and William Co Bhawanthai, about ~$10/fights will be held on Saturday at the same venue as the Sky Solid Guard Champions (BPI's 5-days derby.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

mobile news

BUSINESS

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Excellence in Connection
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Stocks surge 2.2% on Wall St.'s record run

PSEi hits 2-month high at 3,677.19

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacsamana

STOCKS ROSE TO A NEW TWO-MONTH HIGH after tracking the US market's meteoric gains overnight.

Local brokers said bets of another US Federal Reserve interest rate cut when the Fed meets later this month has fueled the rise in Wall Street overnight.

The 29-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index rose 79.27 points or 2.2 percent to 3,677.19, its highest since July 24 when it stood at 3,706.24.

The index's closing level yesterday was also nearing the market's all-time high of 3,791.42 set last July's data from the PSE showed.

Trading volume totaled 4.9 billion shares worth P6.6 billion. Gainers swamped decliners 99 to 36, while 51 stocks were steady.

"Property and banking stocks have been receiving a boost from the expected rate cut on Thursday," said Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities.

"We've also seen several regional markets posting record levels and it's also helping push our market higher, although we have probably hit the ceiling at around 3,750 points."

STOCKS /B1

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■ **HSBC: OFW-fueled** growth can't be sustained /B8

HK economist sees ₱43:$1 this year, ₱41:$1 in '08

By Dwiz C. Dantiles

THE PESO YESTERDAY ROSE TO A new month high of 41.71 to a dollar before closing at 44.015 as some traders suspected strong central bank intervention to curb the sharp appreciation.

In a briefing, Hong Kong-based economist Frederic Neumann yesterday said the peso had more room to rise against the dollar on the back of strong remittances from overseas Filipinos.

Neumann said the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas had been trying to slow down the local currency's appreciation but this ability to hoard dollars was limited. By year's end, the HSBC economist predicted that the peso would firm up at 43 to a dollar.

By next year, he said the peso would average even stronger at 41 and further rally to 40 by end-2008.

Yesterday's close marked a slight decline from Monday's finish of 44.03:$1, but this still represented a gain of 6.6 percent since ending at 49.73 last year.

A local currency dealer said the BSP was heavily buying dollars near the intraday high in the morning, presumably the peso's further appreciation.

Yesterday's peak was the highest level hit by the peso since touching 44.76 last July 24.

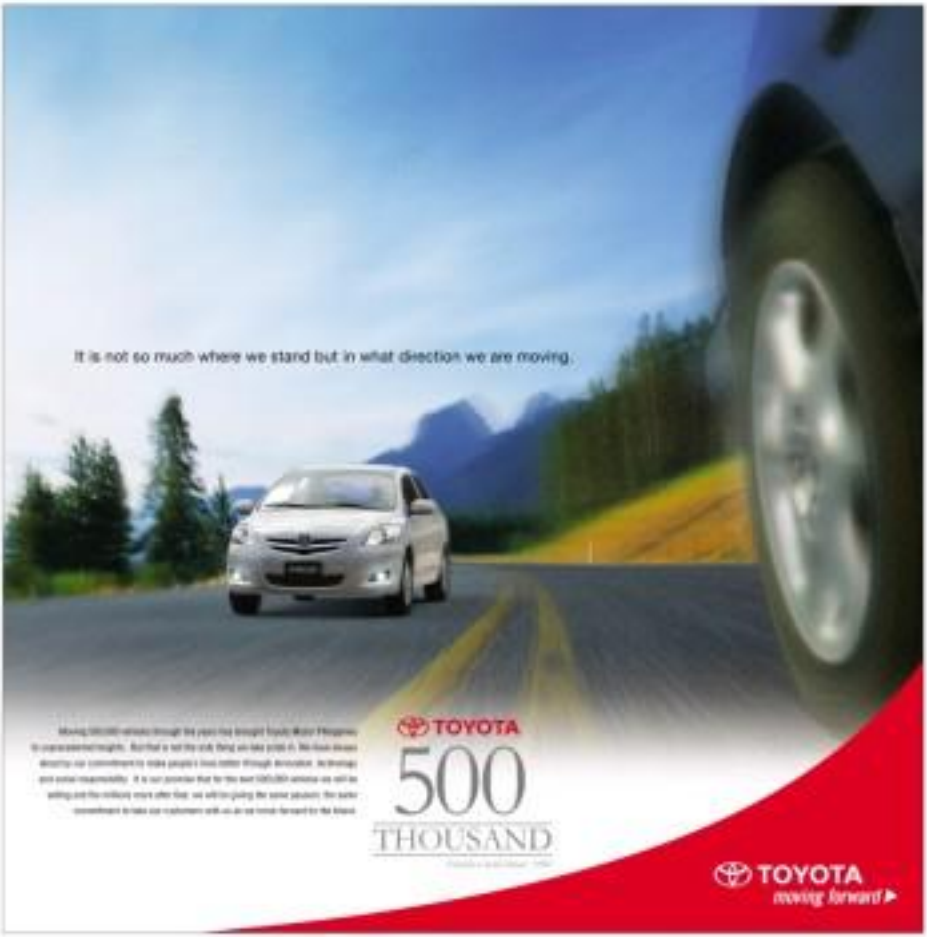
Another currency trader said a breach of the crucial 44.30:$1 mark would mean a breakaway for the local currency.

Neumann said the BSP would have to be content with the rising peso as it could not resist the upward momentum in the currency data.

"Wherever it intervenes, it adds pesos to the system and if there's so much money in the system, the BSP has to siphon it off," he said.

The economist said mopping up excess liquidity was equally costly because of the high rates the central bank was offering to keep these funds locked up in its high-yield special deposit accounts.

At the same time, he said the peso's sharp appreciation was significantly helping to temper the rise in the inflation rate. He noted that the country's inflation was reasonably low for an economy that's growing by more than 7 percent.



7-year treasury bond rate falls

From 7.125%, yield dipped to 6.5% yesterday

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE YIELD ON THE GOVERNMENT'S seven-year treasury bonds fell sharply yesterday, ahead of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' monetary policy meeting on Thursday.

In yesterday's auction of the Bureau of Treasury, the seven-year T-bond was dipped to 6.5 percent from the previous coupon rate of 7.125 percent.

The 19 billion offering was oversubscribed, with P13.5 billion worth of tenders submitted during the auction, which marked the government's first offering of seven-year peso bonds in seven months.

"The rates fell due to expectations that the BSP will cut rates in its meeting on Monday," a trader said.

The trader said the peso's sharp appreciation weighing the BSP is stronger argument to slash its rates, but emerging inflation risks could also prompt the central bank to maintain the rates.

Market players are also concerned with the sustainability of the BSP's high-yielding special deposit accounts (SDA), which had successfully stopped money from Peso bulging north of excess liquidity since the facility was transformed into a more powerful monetary tool in May.

Another banker said the drop in the T-bond rate yesterday to 6.5 percent "might be too aggressive."

"It's clearly liquidity-driven. Of course they will say that the government has less borrowings now, but it's a question of sustainability."

As the rate, he said the T-bonds would no longer be attractive to investors anymore.

Many traders are betting on a BSP rates cut following the surprise 50-basis point reduction by the US Federal Reserve last month.

The BSP's overnight borrowing rate stands at 8 percent after a 150-basis point cut in July, when the central bank likewise scrapped a rising system that paid declining interest rates on high volume of deposited funds.

Most of the interest rates set ring on Thursday, however, the BSP has indicated caution over a potential surge in money supply in the fourth quarter and the skyrocketing oil prices...the two major risks to its inflation outlook.

BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said a cut in the policy rates might or might not stop capital flows.

"Lower interest rates could mean banks taking their funds out of the BSP. That can contribute to higher liquidity in the system. So, while you may want to reduce interest rates down the line, you also have to look at the possible implications that will affect financial turbulence," he stressed.

Last week, the BSP reported that the growth in the country's liquidity (M3) slowed down to 14.9 percent in August year-on-year from 16.7 percent in July. In August, however, there was a net outflow of "hot money" or portfolio investments in local stocks, bonds and money market given the global credit crunch and risk aversion triggered by the US subprime woes.

Domestic liquidity or m3 is the broadest measure of money and is used to enhance the supply of money to an economy.

Rice program benefits outweigh cost of subsidy

By Amy R. Remo

PLANTING HYBRID RICE has saved the country as much as P13.9 billion in rice import cost since the Hybrid Rice Commercialization Program started in 2001, said an agriculture official.

Guinsaugon Bungayong Asi Rice Program executive director Prince Malabanan said this sum the "accumulation of value of incremental milled rice contributed by hybrid rice" from 2001 to the dry season of 2007.

"If we did not plant hybrid rice, this is the value of the rice we had to import," he said.

The cost of direct hybrid seed subsidy since 2001 was only P1.6 billion, Malabanan said.

Malabanan issued the statement in reaction to reports saying that "a sizable amount of money of human resources spent on HRP (Hybrid seed) produce much social benefit."

On the contrary, Malabanan said, planting hybrid rice enabled farmers to harvest as much as 130 to 160 cavans a hectare, higher than their usual output of 100-120 cavans per hectare.

This translates to an increase in profit to about P50,000 a hectare from P15,000.

Last crop year, 3.6 million farmers were planted to hybrid rice. For this year, the target was set at 400,000 hectares.

For 2008, the GMA rice program targets to cover 500,000 hectares, which will be increased to at least 600,000 hectares in 2008.

Malabanan said the subsidy for hybrid rice would likely continue until next year due to its contributions to the farm sector.

"Local government and farmers have also expanded to not to stop the seed subsidy," Malabanan said.

He said the seed subsidy was no longer 100 percent, which was the rate when the program started in 2001.

"Seed subsidy is now only P1,000 for a 20-kilo bag. Seeds cost before were P2,400 and P3,000 per bag," he said.

Of the proposed 372.4 billion budget for the GMA rice program in 2008, some P900 million will be earmarked for the hybrid rice program.

Western Union expands RP operations

By Ronnel W. Domingo and Rya T. Olchondra's

MONEY TRANSFER SERVICES FIRM Western Union Co. is adding 800 outlets in the Philippines by yearend as it pays special attention to the country, which it claims to be a "very important market" for the company.

Christina Gold, chief executive of the Colorado-based firm, said in an interview here its local network soon covered 6,300 locations. The, she said, was expected to reach 7,100 within the year.

"Our priority is convenience for our customers, that is why it is important for us to put up so many outlets as we can," Gold said.

"We want customers to be able to go to our locations with the greatest ease," she added.

Gold said the firm's Philippine expansion formed part of Western Union's global expansion strategy.

"Five years ago we had 120,000 locations because Today we already have 311,000 centers," she said. "By the end of the year we will have 325,000."

Last month, Western Union announced it signed new, multi-year agreements with three of its top agents in the Philippines: Banco de Oro Universal Bank Corp., a Business Services Inc. and ForEx Inc. It recently signed up three new agents—Direct Agent 5 Inc., JP Tan, Inc.(ing Pawnshops and Swiss-based retail chain Ernest Inc.

"(We are very intent) that Our Philippines is the fourth largest receivers of remittances in the world according to the World Bank," Gold said, noting foreign funeral entrances that placed money transfers from abroad at about $14 billion in 2007.

Western Union is also developing a mobile remittances system and micro-lending program also in line with its expansion in the country.

At present, the company offers store-based and online remittance services.

Gold said at the Management Association of the Philippines CEO Conference yesterday that the company was testing mobile systems with undisclosed carriers.

She added that the company wanted to offer a complementary micro-lending scheme that would extend $100 to $300,000 in loans.

Those loans, she said, would be aimed at providing capital to customers who were deemed "high credit risk" by traditional lending institutions.

Gilda

APC secures $380-M loan

Group of foreign, local banks to provide funds

By Abigail L. Ho

AN ADOTED POWER INC. (ADOPI), a joint venture between Aboitiz Power Corp. and Norway's SN Power, has secured a $380-million loan to partially finance the balance of the $530-million purchase price of the 360-megawatt (MW) Magat hydropower facility in Isabela.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, APC corporate secretary Eli Antalan Oporto said the loan came from a consortium composed of the International Finance Corp., Nordic Investment Bank, Banco de Oro EPCI Inc., Bank of the Philippine Islands, China Banking Corp., Development Bank of the Philippines, The Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corp. Ltd., Philippine National Bank and Security Bank.

Of the $380-million loan, $260-million represents the debt component while the peso component is P11.5 billion.

Oporto said the loan would be used for the Magat facility acquisition and for the refinancing of a $159-million loan from Aboitiz Equity Ventures and shareholders' advances.

SNAP took over the operation of the Magat plant in April, following its remittance of the $371-million down payment to Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp.

The joint venture last year won the bidding for the plant with an offer of $530 million, edging out rival competitor First Generation Hydropower Energy Corp.

Philex posts ₱1.08B in gold, copper output

By Amy R. Remo

PHILEX MINING CORP. said it had produced P1.08 billion worth of gold and copper last month.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Philex Chairman and CEO Walter W. Brown said 69,884 dry metric tons of the **contained copper and gold** ore were delivered to and treated at the Tampo Flotation facilities.

This resulted in shipments of 7,686 dry metric tons of copper concentrate, with an average copper content of 25.99 percent, 56.43 grams per dry metric ton of gold and 53.63 grams per dry metric ton of silver.

According to the disclosure, the **shipment** consisted of an equivalent metal content of 1.94 million kilograms (kilo) **million** feed of copper, 93,491 grams (12,310 ounces) of gold and 393,811 grams (12,663 ounces) of silver.

Philex said it had **more than** doubled its profit in the first seven months of the year to P5.2 billion from last year's P2.4 billion.

Brown earlier said he was optimistic that the trend would continue until the end of the year.

CEB sees Manila as major connection hub in Asia

CEBU PACIFIC HAS STARTED flying from Hong Kong or Taipei to Bangkok, Shanghai, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, with Manila as the transit station.

Candice Iyog, CEB vice president for marketing and product, said "these international connections will position the country as a travel hub and we plan to offer more destinations as we further expand our regional operations."

The Hong Kong and Taipei flights to Bangkok, Shanghai or Singapore and vice versa are of four daily. Connections will be four times weekly to Kuala Lumpur and three times to Jakarta.

Passengers can check in their baggage through to their final destination and need not claim them in Manila.

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Bayan converts ₱4.4B in advances into equity

By Rita T. Olchondra

BAYAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS Inc., the private subsidiary of Benpres Holdings Corp., is converting its parent company's advance subscriptions of ₱4.4 billion into equity, the telco's officials said on the sidelines of the Management Association of the Philippines CEO Conference.

"The advances are deposits for future subscriptions," Bayan CFO Melville G. Bey said. "About ₱4.4 billion in advances were booked. This was even before the company entered into rehabilitation. These deposits will now be converted into capital stock."

"The conversion may be completed by yearend," Bey said. "We are now preparing the papers for submission to the SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission)."

Bayan is also targeting higher sales for the year because of its wireless landline service.

Chief executive consultant Sarah Palermo said Bayan was preparing to spend almost ₱1.8 billion over a five-year period, mostly to put up infrastructure or expansion, including demand for the service.

The ₱1.8 billion is in addition to the ₱2 billion in capital expenditure for 2007. Of that budget, about ₱1.3 billion has been spent, mostly for building wireless landline base stations.

"The company may spend ₱2 billion or more a year for the next five years as demand grows," he said.

Palermo said funding for the next three years would come from internally generated funds. The company is still in the process of repaying not its $7.05 million debt by 2023, enabling it to exit its 10-year rehabilitation plan since September of 2004.

The company pays about ₱128 million to creditors every quarter, Bey said. Bayan's target was to pay off ₱2.39 billion in interest and principal by the end of 2007. As of September 2007, it has paid ₱998 million in principal and ₱1.75 billion in interest.

In the first half, Bayan posted 12-percent growth on the back of surging data and voice revenues. Bayan posted a net income of ₱860 million in the first six months, a turnaround from its net loss of ₱1.18 billion in the same period a year earlier.

Palermo also said the company was on track to beating its revenue and net income but was lost the use of income would depend on the strength of the peso.

Bayan wants to enlist 300,000 wireless landline subscribers by year's end. So far, it has signed up about 70,000.

Bayan's wireless landline is available in Manila, Davao, Cebu, Cagayan de Oro, Iloilo, Legaspi, Tacloban, Bacolod and General Santos.

Palermo said it would take P25 billion and two to three years of infrastructure rollout to cover the entire country.

Galoc oil to be exported to Korea, Dubai

By Abigail L. Ho

GALOC PRODUCTION Co. (GPC), the consortium operating Service Contract 14C in offshore Palawan, is looking at exporting the oil to be produced from the petroleum block by fiftieth next year to Korea or Dubai.

In a briefing yesterday, GPC country manager Ray Belmes said final talks on the group's share of the area's oil reserves, the oil that could be produced from the field was of the light sweet variety—unavailable for the country's existing refineries.

The country has only two remaining oil refiners: Petron Corp. and Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. Petron's facilities are configured to refine Saudi Arabian crude, while those of Shell are designed to refine Iranian crude.

Palma said that since oil from the Galoc field was rich of light quality as those that existing refineries could refine, Galoc oil would have to be sold outside the country most likely to Korea and Dubai.

GPC expects to get some 10 million barrels of oil from the Galoc field over the next several years, with first oil to be drawn by March next year.

Ad Libitum Telecommunications chief executive consultant Tarsis Palermo (L), Ambassador Albert Del Rosario and Evelyn Singson, chair of the Management Association of the Philippines CEO Conference Committee, at the 6th MAP International CEO Conference at the Makati Shangrila, Makati City.

FPHC borrowing $220M to raise Meralco stake

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Larson

FIRST PHILIPPINE HOLDINGS CORP. (FPHC) of the Lopez group plans to raise $220 million through a syndicated loan to fund its proposed acquisition of an additional 15.6 percent in utility firm Manila Electric Co. (Meralco).

At the sidelines of a Management Association of the Philippines international CEO forum, FPHC president Elpidio L. Ibañez said half of the loan would be denominated in dollars and the other half in the local currency.

It has tapped Banco de Oro to lead banks that will arrange the loan. Ibañez said the funding may be secured by the end of the month.

FPHC has a 37.7-percent stake in Meralco.

FPHC earlier disclosed that it wanted to buy the 6.6 percent in Meralco held by the Hondo Peralta Fund, and the 9 percent owned by Union Resins.

If it completes the purchase of the two stakes, this will increase FPHC's total holdings in Meralco to more than 53 percent.

FPHC is also seeking shareholder approval next week to raise fresh funds from a proposed preferred share offer to prepare for the government's planned sale of its 25-percent stake in Meralco.

Ibañez said FPHC plans to raise P20 billion from the issuance of 200 million preferred shares at P100 each.

Preferred shares carry dividends at fixed rates which must be paid before any dividends are paid to common shareholders. However, these are nonvoting shares.

FPHC is the holding company for the Lopez family's interests in power generation, distribution and infrastructure businesses.

Stocks

From page B1

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas will meet tomorrow to decide on interest rates, with some economists betting policymakers will slash key interest rates by 25 basis points given faster inflation and the Federal Reserve's aggressive half-point rate cut last month.

"We may expect a 'sell on news' after the second half's meeting, but the strength of regional markets and Wall Street, if sustained, will help bolster sentiment," De Leon said.

"Hints that the third-quarter gross domestic product might surprise with lower-than-expected numbers again are also keeping the buying momentum intact," said Francisco Liboro of PCCI Securities.

"The market is [also] betting the US Fed may once another 25 basis points off its key interest rates," Regis Tejam Inc. president Joseph Reyes said.

The US Federal Reserve earlier slashed key interest rates by a surprise 50 basis points in its September meeting, signaling it was ready to shield financial markets from volatility caused by a steadying subprime housing mortgage crisis. FOR a report [illegible]

Rice sector seen growing 5.74% in 2008 despite dry spell, typhoons

By Arny N. Barros

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE expects the rice sector to grow by 5.74 percent next year despite the lingering effects of the prolonged dry spell and typhoons.

The department is banking on production programs to make up for the shortfall this year, which should carry over to next year.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap earlier estimated that the sector would grow by 3 percent this year.

According to Glenmaria Managuinag, the Fiex Program executive director Pilaro Multisector, growth drivers next year include the restoration of irrigation systems, expansion of genetic material and provisions for post harvest facilities.

He added that the additional harvest of some 300,000 to 350,000 metric tons from the quick turnaround planting program this year may compensate for the losses incurred from the dry spell.

A total of 99,217 hectares has been planted in palay since the QTS program started on Aug. 1, exceeding the target of 80,174 hectares.

This buoyed hopes that the country will meet its target production this year of 16.23 million metric tons.

The DA said it was confident that rice supply would be enough for the whole year, given the additional harvests from the QTS areas and the current traffic stock in the warehouses of the National Food Authority.

According to data from the GMA Rice Program, Region 12 led the QTS planting with 33,856 hectares, followed by Region 10 with 12,009 hectares; and Region 6 with 12,043 hectares.

The QTS scheme uses early maturing seeds including irrigated areas to recoup for rice output due to the drought.

Earlier, Malacañang said the DA targets to raise palay production to as much as 19 million metric tons by 2010.

Jobs at Subic up 11%

Locators expanding operations, SBMA says

By Ramon W. Domingo

EXPANSION PROJECTS OF SUBIC LOCAtors jacked up the number of jobs in the free port by 10.9 percent to 70,408 as of end-August, according to the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

SBMA data show that the increase from last year was felt as locator companies began expansion projects. The entry of new firms into the free port also increased jobs.

In the eight-month period, the manufacturing sector accounted for 16,264 new jobs, while the services sector and construction sector opened up 33,495 and 1,892 new jobs, respectively.

The SBMA labor report also showed that of the total workers, two-thirds or 47,648 were males working in companies engaged in services and construction.

Female workers, meanwhile, number 22,770, more than half of whom are also employed in the services sector.

Further, SBMA said females working for manufacturing firms outnumber their male counterparts at 10,276 to 7,045.

Chungpa Eco Technology, the biggest source of workers in the Subic free port zone, accounting for two of three employees.

Other workers come from Zambales (one of five); Bataan (14 percent); Metro Manila (6 percent); and Pampanga (3 percent).

There are 598 companies operating in the Subic free port zone, of which the top 10 employer firms account for about 34 percent of the workforce here.

These include shipbuilder Hanjin Heavy Industries & Construction Corp., with total direct hires of 6,946; contractor firm EC Tech, 4,289; computer-maker Wistron Infocomm, 3,237; electronics manufacturer Subic Philippines, 2,483; and manpower contractor Rowelltan Resources, 2,231.

Also on top of the list are electronics firm Sanyo Denki, 1,143; manpower service provider Jasmine Touch, 1,046; manufacturer-exporter Nanomi Furniture Services, 1,257; Lihoch Garment Manufacturing Co., with 926; and courier service giant Federal Express, with 910 workers.

Last June, SBMA announced Hanjin had committed to pour an additional $684 million in its $1-billion shipyard to Subic.

Hanjin's expansion plans are expected to open up more than 13,000 direct jobs by next year and 15,000 by 2011.

SSS: Still deep in the woods

THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM is awash with P17.3 billion in cash. Banco de Oro said this whopping sum for the SSS shareholdings in the Equitable-PCI Bank. My column of Sept. 19 drew the background behind the sale.

The multitude of SSS members should honor a deep sigh of relief. Yet, there is little reason for jubilation. Admittedly, the P17.3 billion fills a big hole in the financial statement. But, as the 2006 annual report clearly shows, there are other gaping holes. SSS is still deep in the woods.

First, in 1999, SSS lost P395 million in Rizalbroker Philippines against the full contract price parcels of land and the assignment of 200 million shares. Rizalbroker defaulted. In 2004, the court issued a writ of preliminary attachment.

Second, also in 1999, then SSS CEO Carlos Jerelman ensured in an affidavit that, on direct order by President Estrada, SSS bought shares of Belle Resources. The total acquisition cost was P1.870 billion. As of 2006, the shares were worth P476.146 million, resulting in a loss of P902.592 million.

Third, real estate properties booked at over P12.8 billion "include ... properties consisting of condominium units, parking spaces (), commercial and industrial units which are encharged with shares of stock. It also includes prime lots acquired in settlement of commercial/industrial loans."

But these loans pale when compared with the losses in investments in low-cost housing and in small loans today, in time, calamity loans.

Early in his administration, President Fidel Ramos endorsed on a flagship project of building 1.2 million low-cost housing units all over the country. To raise the P500 billion needed for his grandiose plan, Ramos ordered SSS, GSIS and Pag-IBIG to pitch in. SSS lent P40 billion to the National Home Mortgage Finance for relending to low-cost homeowners. Years years later, the purposes, the flagship was in total shambles. Laden with hopelessly uncollectible loans, MHMFI has gone bankrupt, not once, but twice, but three times. SSS is full holding an empty bag.

To promote membership during the early years, SSS opened the small loans window. After being a member for only six months, a member could borrow against his salary to pay for his child's tuition. Or, after a typhoon, he could take out a calamity loan. Today, the small loans total over P58 billion. Over 60 percent are hopelessly overdue. Many of the borrowers cannot be located anymore. What is worse, when the borrowers retire, there will have no pensions to refer to.

When I go over the SSS annual financial report, I have to keep reminding myself that, not being an accountant, when an investment goes down in value, the loss is considered merely a paper loss and is not recognized in the books as a loss. The accounting rule has been affirmed by the Supreme Court. So, SSS carries billions in assets which are nothing but comes easily: thats it, very little wages, but mostly air.

Let me say at this stage that the mess at the SSS has been festering long before the appointments of Chair Thelma Cristina and president and CEO Corazon de la Paz. Their tasks have been truly Herculean. (More next: What to do with SSS.)

People, Events & Products

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inquirerweb@inquirer.com.ph

Edna Arias Espinosa

Filipina lone Asian speaker in Mideast PR confab

JUDY B. SOLA, 40S, THE CEO OF World Communications (Philippines) Inc. (WorldCom/PhI) has been chosen as the lone Asian speaker to join more than 40 leading industry experts in this October's International PR Congress to the Middle East. Other speakers are industry stalwart Campbell Communications adviser to then Prime Minister Tony Blair, and Colleen Harris, MD3, former Press Secretary to HRH The Prince of Wales.

Sola's extensive background in PR and communications management has not only maximized her competitive edge among the country's PR practitioners, it has also gained her wide acclaim in the international PR scene. With more than 20 years of experience in PR and Integrated Marketing Communications under her belt, Sola's dynamic presence is considered a staple in both local and international conferences. Prior to the upcoming Middle East convention, she was also selected as lone speaker from the Asia Pacific Region to the International Public Relations Association and the Public Relations Society of America Congress in Chicago in 2002.

In 1993, Sola partnered with global PR giant Worldcom PR Group Inc. where she consequently served as regional chair of the Asia Pacific for three years. Sola has also been consistently active in the Public Relations Society of the Philippines where she was elected director for 3 terms, chaired the Professional Development Committee and the most coveted, Anvil Awards. She has also served as executive director of the World Young Business Achievers Award, an international award body that recognized successful young leaders in business and entrepreneurship.

SOLA

Sola's fervor for excellence in PR is also manifested in her civic involvement. She is currently serving as Chairman of the Philippine Chapter of the World Young Business Achievers Foundation, Inc. and is a member of the Philippine Red Cross Chapter in Dubai, UAE.

GE Money Bank refits branches

GE MONEY BANK (GEMB) CORPORATION is fully refitting its 15 branches following its launch last year featuring sleek in-branch technology and modern ambiance. Each of the branches will undergo a total transformation to provide its customers with a simple, better banking experience. It is an initiative that aims to address customers' needs of accessibility, efficiency and convenience.

With its modern look and simple lines, the newly-refitted branches are able to simplify banking processes and provide personalized service to its customers.

For more information on GE Money Bank, visit any of its branches or call 7721 4000, or log on to www.gemoney-bank.com.ph.

Musicara at the Powerplant Mall

THE TWO HEDPEX BEAT AT MUSICARA IN Makati on Oct. 6 at the Rockwell Tent grounds inside Powerplant Mall. The hot lineup at 8 p.m. will be La Carlota Bronstad-ers. Party will commingle with The Wicked Farmers Band and DJ Mike Collantes playing the sounds of the '80s. Specialty guests include the cast of upcoming indie film "Beermuda" starring Joel Torre, Ronnie Lazaro, Eric Quizon, Pipoy Eigenmann and Soren Sarcia. The event is co-presented by the Association of Negros Producers, Jim Miguel Cojuangco and La Salle Recoletos Alumni of Negros Musicara.

Living up to the word 'tawad' in shopping

ETYMOLOGICALLY SPEAKING, the word "tawad" or "pagtawad" ng tawad", due to the inherent linguistic creativity of the Filipino, was originally used from being a plea of forgiveness to a request for a substantial discount. It was to become an almost innate duo resembances throughout the country and become synonymous with act.

So how do Filipinos make tawad? It's basically more like a game of pare-wits, strategy, and strategy. Where they test a potentially good product they want to buy, they start by asking for a hefty discount, which ranges from around 40-sometimes up to an unbelievable 50 percent-tawad, coupled with a poker face, with the hope of the seller fixed by giving in.

If they sense still resistance, the next strategy would be to walk away giving the impression of looking for another store to look for the same product, and also hoping that the seller settles for a compromise. If fair enough, the seller yields just to seal the deal, usually if it's a Saturday or the day where often that not, the customer gets what he wants-both product and large discount.

Thus, unveiling the value of the price through tawad or pagtawad became a time more than among Filipinos regardless of social and financial condition, creating a unique paradise like Divisoria. And to bring Isumore Divisoria, Ibrahim Mall is no exception.

However, the difference where shopping at Ibrahim Mall—the "bargain capital of the Philippines"—is that, more importantly, the prevailing philosophy is the mall is to serve its customers first and foremost before their money through quality products, whether the buyer made tawad or not.

Living up to their name as bargain capital? There is no doubt about Ibrahim Mall's viewpoint when it comes to giving due importance to the Filipino shopper. And this is the reason why the Ibrahim Mall offers also barely no competitor. Ibrahim Mall is absolutely the right place of "True Price Shopping Experience".

XANDO RENEWS PARTNERSHIP WITH WATSONS

Parfaitorium Inc. the local distributor of Xando Blush and Bath Bottle Philippines, recently renewed its partnership with Watsons particular store chain. The limited-selling delivery department in the country today. Xando Blush flavor is exclusively available at all Watsons outlets. Now on its 2nd year with the personal store shops. Parfaitorium's president Wilfred Chua expressed their satisfaction over Watsons' all out support for Xando products. Wilfred added to our target market and sound revenue coming in from Watsons of their tremendous support. Parfaitorium Inc.

Figaro Coffee around the country

COFFEE IS NOW A LIFESTYLE product and coffee shops like Figaro would do well to stay close to where the coffee farms are, around the country. Figaro Coffee moves its branch directly home coffee farmers in the 22 coffee growing provinces from Benguet to Indian Richard.

Three years ago, Figaro started spreading the aroma of its coffee blends beyond Metro Manila, starting with Cebu. Its latest market is those of 2000 Bon Tagaytay, followed shortly by Baguio in early 2005. Soon after, a franchised outlet was opened by Cindy Tan in the Chinese Mall in the business district of Davao in September 2005.

Figaro is poised to open its SM Bacolod, while plans continue for a few more outlets in Cebu headed by Gil Figueroa as drive to be operated by Dante Tan, a cousin of the Davao franchisee.

More provincial branches are within the development radar of Figaro's management in the next 2 quarters. Log on to www.figaroonline.com.ph or view the various locations of Figaro. With a Figaro outlet near you, you are always assured of your cup of great-tasting coffee, within easy reach.

Animal blessing at Bonifacio High Street

THE ANIMAL WELFARE COALITION, Holders & Leaders, Texas Road Runner Grill and Fuego Kocina invites all animal lovers to an animal blessing on Oct 7, Sunday, 5 p.m., at the Bonifacio High Street, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. The event celebrates World Animal Day (WAD).Those will be treats, games and prizes for the pets and their humans. This event is in cooperation with Bonifacio High Street and the City of Taguig. Rev. Fr. Rolan Que will bless the animals. Be there rain or shine! For more information, call 867-4546 or log on to www.animalwelfare.com.ph.

Pork-less cuisine for Ramadan

IN OBSERVANCE OF THE MUSlim holy month of Ramadan, the Sari Grill House is offering more pork dishes for the Muslim fasted Muslims and non-Muslims alike to break up on their day-long fast that ends at 7 p.m. daily.

Sari Grill House, the first halal restaurant in entire central business district of Ortigas Center and Subaru the SM Business Head Count, has hooked up to menu by introducing the Malaysian Chicken Satay with Peanut Sauce, the Indonesian Beef Satay with Hot Mango Tip, the Malaysian Beef Curry and other food from Southeast Asia to give Muslims more halal food choice as they break their daily fast that starts at 6 a.m.

But the main attraction of the Sari Grill House remains the spicy Sari, the local version of the Satay and Satay that is the rave in Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore.

Sari, which is made of prime beef satay, is served with grilled beef or chicken. What makes the "Sari experience" unique is the fact that the rice served is cooked to coconut leaves and is dipped in the Sari soup when eaten.

Call or visit the Sari Grill House at 7F, 30-B Ortigas Mkon, SM Service Road Cross, Quezon Highway, Quezon City (632) 3609/430-8282/ 0917-5209815.

G Audio's new home

One of the country's most trusted and popular names in its Car Entertainment (CE) set-ups and accessories detailing has relocated to a much better location. G Audio's new home is at Greenhills Garden Square Condominium, 297 Ortigas Avenue, Greenhills. "Our intent is to get closer and be more accessible to our client base," states Gerry Chua, the man behind award-winning show cars and the accredited ICE installer of the "Newmarket Mafia".

The G Audio shop boasts of a much expansive floor space. A three car garage can accommodate major ICE installations, repair and automotive detailing at the same time. "G Audio is an accredited dealer of major in-car audio-video systems such as Sony X-Audio, Mosses, JVC, Alpine, Polk Audio, Helosonic and Adaptive automotive detailing," says Chua. A display rack inside the climate-controlled showroom allows patrons to view different audio-video products and suggested set ups. "This would allow clients to decide on what kind of set up they prefer and our trained staff can show them the different features of their desired brand," adds Chua.

For details on how to improve your SQ, get in touch with G Audio at 705-5218 or log on to www.g-audiogph.com.

Motul and Subaru: A winning combination

SUBARU RALLY DRIVER COEN CROCKER recently secured his second consecutive Asia-Pacific Rally Championship after his victory in the Rally Indonesia. Crocker, together with co-driver Ben Atkinson, had a tough race in the heat and rugged roads of Indonesia, but the pair battled on to grab the necessary points to win the championship.

A crucial ingredient to Crocker's campaign in winning the Asia-Pacific Rallye Championship (APRC) is the use of Motul lubricants. Motul GC Asia has been powering the Subaru APRC team, Motul is the oil and lubricant of choice of the Subaru World Rallye Team competing in the World Rallye Championship (WRC).

Motul 300V is made up of Double Ester technology which significantly improves engine sweeper performance by carefully balancing the ratio of complex esters with the newly developed macromolecular high polymer ester developed by Motul. By maintaining a high film strength, the 300V series is able to withstand long-term shearing loads and sustain the oil's advanced lubricating properties even on the highest of temperatures.

The 300V series was designed to perform in engines across which are subjected to extreme conditions that often exceed the "safe zone" where traditional lubricants fall short. This performance of the 300V translates to consistent oil pressure, lower engine response and lower oil temperature for improved engine performance, higher horsepower output and complete engine durability. It is literally like a smart oil tailor-made to suit the engine.

Motul's line of oil and lubricants range from the high-performance 300V series, 100-percent synthetic motor oils for you and diesel, 4OT, 10T, power steering oils, limited-slip differential oils, gear oils, coolants, brake fluids and a comprehensive maintenance line.

Motul is a certified, recommended and oil of choice of racing teams that compete in the Japan Super GT, World Rallye Championship (WRC), 24 Hour Le Mans, Asia Pacific Rallye Championship (APRC) and the Moto GP. For details on how to improve your car's performance, call 7726-0000 or visit the interchange Subaru showroom along Edsa and Autoplus Sportsventures at 233 Edsa, Mandaluyong City or log on to www.motul.com.ph.

Republic of the Philippines
Manila Electric
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Manila Electric Company (Meralco) through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and to submit their bids for the:

Name of Project / Brief Description	One (1) lot Supply, delivery, installation and commissioning of 50 Hz Substation for the Meralco Metro Regional Offices/Branches, per SSP Terms of Reference. Technical specifications, scope of work and Bill of Quantities:
	1. Las Piñas Regional Office 2. Cubao Regional Office 3. Taytay Regional Office 4. San Pedro Branch 5. Alaminos Branch 6. Bacoor Branch 7. Novaliches Branch 8. Baliuag Branch 9. Malolos Branch 10. Dasmariñas Branch 11. Santolan Branch 12. Antipolo Branch 13. Lucena Branch 14. Calamba Branch 15. Legaspi Branch 16. Naga Branch
Approved Budgetary Contract ABC	₱1,461,961,600.00 (All prices)
Delivery Period	Within one hundred eighty (180) calendar days after receipt of the approved contract.

Prospective bidders should have completed, at least three (3) but not more than five (5) similar requirements, executed and completed from 1/2003 to present. Aggregating to at least 50% of the ABC, one of which shall at least 75% of the ABC. The Eligibility Documents will be used as the Preliminary Examination of Bids and can be conveniently "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid will be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statements and Documents, Bid Security, Performance Security, Terms of Payment, Bid Evaluation Criteria, Post Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of the Sec. 47(b) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	Starting 3 October 2007 up to 2:30 p.m. only
2. Pre-Bid Conference	26 October 2007, 10:00 a.m.
3. Opening of Bids	13 November 2007, 2:30 p.m.
4. Bid Evaluation	1 week shall be in accordance with the prescribed period in the IRR of RA 9184
5. Post-qualification	2 working days after receipt of the Notice of Award
6. Notice of Award	within 15 calendar days but not later than 15 January 2008

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P50,000.00 to the BAC Cashier.

The BAC reserves its responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of his bid.

The BAC reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and shall be no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **JUAN DE ZUZUNAGA, JR.**
Chairman

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Sealed applications for eligibility and bid documents for the supply and delivery of 2,000,000 and Paper Seal (OTP No. 11) for use in connection with the October 29, 2007 Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Elections, shall be received at the Canteen Session Hall, 5th Floor Palacio del Gobernador Building, Intramuros, Manila, October 10, 2007 at 10:30 in the morning, at which place, date and time, said sealed bids shall be opened in the presence of the members of the Bids and Awards Committee, representatives of the Commission on Elections, Commission on Audit (Resident Auditor), accredited bidders and industry. Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting, the participating bidders and the public, with an approved budget of Five Million Four Hundred Thousand Pesos (P 5,400,000.00) charged against the savings of the May 14, 2007 National and Local Elections.

A Pre-bid Conference shall be held on October 8, 2007 at 10:00 in the morning at the Canteen Session Hall, 5th Floor Palacio del Gobernador Building.

Bid documents and specifications may be obtained during regular office hours, beginning October 4, 2007 from the Property Division upon payment of the Cash Division, Commission on Elections, city, non-refundable amount of Two Thousand Seven Hundred Pesos (P2,700.00).

Bids shall be accompanied by a Bid Security equivalent to one per centum (1%) of the approved budget for the contract to be bid, in the form of cash or Manager's/Cashier's check payable to the "Commission on Elections".

Delivery Mod/Site:	50% on or before October 15, 2007 50% on or before October 16, 2007

The COMELEC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any formal defect as to form and substance, and accept the lowest complying responsive bid that is most advantageous to the Commission/Government. It reserves the right to waive the qualifications of the bidders after the opening and during the contract execution. Should it opt to award on an item-by-item basis, one situation of the bidder to materially downgrade the substance of such statements, the COMELEC shall adequately the bidder upon due notice without any obligation whatsoever on the part of the COMELEC for any expenses or loss that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of its bid.

October 2, 2007

(Sgd.) **JOSE M. TOLENTINO, JR.**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid
Rehabilitation of L-TO Region 3 Motor Vehicle Inspection Station Renovation and Improvement of MVIS building

Term of Security	Minimum Amount of Bid Agreement Eligibility Bid Validity (in accordance)
1. Cash, cashier's or manager's check issued by a bank	Two percent (2%)
2. Bank draft/guarantee or irrevocable letter of credit issued by a bank	Five percent (5%)
3. Surety bond callable upon demand issued by a surety or insurance company	Thirty percent (30%)

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JOSE MARIA "BARRY" ABAD-SANTOS VALDES

Passed away on October 1, 2007.

Wife **Gigi**, children **Jan**, **Franco**, **Boogie**, **Ida** and life partner **Phoebe** say goodbye with love.

His remains are at **Pinaglabanan Church, San Juan.**

Interment will follow after the **5:00 p.m. Mass, Friday, October 5, 2007.**

Ernesto Frias Gemino

Ex-Mayor of Cebu, Visayas
Peacefully joined the Lord on 27 September 2007
at the age of 86

He is survived by: **Fortuna** (+) children **Jaime** and **Belle**, **Sabel** and **Daisy**, **Nedo** and **Sue** (+) **Bimbo** (+) and **Amor**, **Olive** (+) and **Ray**, and **Eliseo** together with grandchildren, brothers, sisters, relatives and friends, request the prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the family residence at 1539 San Luis St., Cor. Tilos, Cebu.

Interment will be on October 6, 2007, Saturday, 2:00 p.m. at the Antonio Rocarte (Tilos) Cemetery after the 9:00 a.m. necrological services at the General Tinio Municipal Hall.

"I am the resurrection, and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies, and whoever believes in Me will not ever die."

EULALIA TANGCO LOPEZ

of Garcia, Cagayan

Peacefully joined our Lord Jesus Christ on October 1, 2007 at the age of 101.

She is the beloved wife of HILDO (R. I.) and sadly missed but lovingly remembered by her children and spouses: HILDITA and HILDOR (SUSING); ADELA and JEFFREY (CATHERINE); THELMA and ANTONIO (CRISTINA); ROSITA and HILDOR (ROBERTA); JOSE and BARBARA (TESS); JACQUELIN and CONRAD (BERNARD); HILDOR and EDRICE (CHERYL); HILDO JR. and Ms. HILDRED (GABRIEL); EULALIA and ENRIQUE (+) (CHRISTINE) and HILDRED JOSEPH; grandchildren and great grandchildren, relatives and friends.

Her remains lie in state at LEVISA MEMORIAL CHAPELS in St. Ignatius St., Pandacan City.

Interment will take place on October 7, 2007 at Holy Rosary Memorial Park, Sandoval Ave., Quezon City, after the 9:00 A.M. Mass.

We ask for your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Atty. Angel "Lito" Tinio Domingo

Sinagtalog, Manila and Guimba, Nueva Ecija
Ateneo de Manila High School Class 1956
U.P. College of Law Class 1960

Peacefully joined his Creator and wife Agnes **(Cielito) Flores** and parents **Francisco** and **Ala Tinio Domingo** on Sept. 30, 2007 at the age of 69.

His loving children, **Ma. Ala (Nha)** and **Margie**, brother **Benjamin**, in-laws, nephews, nieces and other relatives & friends requests pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

He remains lie in state at the Capilla de la Virgen, Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati.

Interment will be on Thursday Oct. 4, 2007 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 9:00 A.M. Mass at the Santuario de San Antonio.

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BUSINESS

HSBC: OFW-fueled growth can't be sustained

Growth to come from BPO, mining, tourism, says analyst

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC GROWTH, as fueled by remittances from overseas Filipino workers, will likely last for five to ten years given favorable global demographics, but a more solid industrial backbone has to be built to sustain growth of over 7 percent over the long haul.

According to visiting HSBC economist Frederic Neumann, the country should work harder to attract more investments, and harness nonremittance potentials from three sectors—business process outsourcing, mining and tourism.

The country's gross domestic product (GDP)—a closely watched economic indicator, which sums up all goods and services produced by the domestic economy—grew by 7.3 percent in the first semester to hit its strongest in 20 years.

"Despite this tremendous economic achievement in the first half, to some degree, it's a bit of a mirage because it was fueled by a tremendous amount of remittances coming from abroad," Neumann said. "But over the long term, that model of economic development is not sustainable."

In the last four months, for instance, Neumann said growth in remittances from overseas Filipinos had decelerated, He said his could have a disruptive impact on private consumption in the quarters ahead.

For this year, Neumann expects the country's growth to average at 6.8 percent, and then slow down to 5.5 percent by next year as it remained "vulnerable to shifts in sentiment."

"We can't maintain an economic growth rate of 7 to 8 percent by just basically throwing money to the economy," he said. "I'm not saying it's not a real achievement, but what we have to see more investments to make it sustainable, and investment is what is sorely lacking."

Neumann said the banks' real lending growth remained anemic, suggesting sluggish investment appetite.

"There has been activity in the construction sector, but this is largely financed by cash flows [older OFWs bringing money to build homes for their retirement," he said.

But the analysts said favorable demographics would likely continue for the meantime. He is referring to the country's young population, outstanding it with the aging population in western countries—a condition that is seen to drive up demand for imported labor.

He added the country would also benefit from remittance dividends in the form of skills and earnings, brought home by returning workers, which could be invested locally. This is what is happening in India, which experienced the remittance phenomenon ahead of the Philippines.

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Megaworld seals Iloilo airport deal

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lucero

MEGAWORLD CORP HAS FINALLY SIGNED deals and purchase agreements with the government to buy the 54.5-hectare old Iloilo airport property in Mandurriao, Iloilo City for P1.2 billion in cash.

In a disclosure to the stock exchange, Megaworld said it would apply with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza) for a special economic zone (ecozone) and turn the old airport into a business district.

The property firm expects the project to become a magnet for major business process outsourcing (BPO) companies interested in setting up shop in the Visayas region.

Also, Megaworld plans to build educational facilities geared toward providing value-added training to equip prospective employees with the necessary skills suited to the requirements of call centers and other BPO businesses that will be based in the proposed business district.

Iloilo is the center of commerce and education in Western Visayas. On the other hand, Megaworld is the pioneer developer of urban information technology or IBO parks in the country, starting with the Peza-accredited fastwood City CyberPark in Quezon City.

Alliance Global Group Inc. has a 46-percent stake in Megaworld, and is the holding firm of property magnate Andrew Tan. The holding firm has a P22.4-billion war chest as of the end of the first half. Its controls both MCIT and Megaworld.

The government's attempt to auction off the old Iloilo airport property sometime in the second quarter was declared a failure because all bid prices submitted were below the P1.2 billion floor price set by the Department of Finance.

SSS mulls over plan to invest ₱18.7B abroad

STATE PENSION FUND SOCIAL SECURITY System (SSS) is studying the possibility of investing roughly $18.7 billion of its assets abroad, similar to what the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) has done.

At the sidelines of yesterday's Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) international CEO Forum, SSS president Corazon dela Paz said that, under its charter, the pension fund could invest 7.5 percent of its assets in foreign instruments.

Total assets of the SSS are estimated to reach P250 billion.

Dela Paz said the pension fund is currently receiving proposals from "interested parties" who wish to act as financial advisor for the underwriting.

"This still has to go through the commission," Dela Paz said. "We can make a decision by the first semester next year."

Dela Paz said the SSS has yet to decide on the mix of investments. The pension fund is considering both equities and fixed income instruments.

In the first half of the year, the SSS made P13.5B billion in investment income and collected P29.94 billion in members' contributions.

The investment income surged from 9% billion in the same period last year, following the recent sale of SSS shares in blue chips like San Miguel Corp. and Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT).

The SSS sold its shares equivalent to a board seat in San Miguel for P3.3.22 billion, and generated another P2 billion from the sale of some PLDT shares.

Earlier, the Government Service Insurance System announced plans to invest $1 billion of its assets in the international investment market to boost its income generating ability. Elizabeth Sanchez-Lucero

MOTORING

Editor Cesar D. Mangosong

Parks conservation marks Isuzu's 10th year in RP

By Charlie S. Bukar

WHILE CARMAkers are still in the process of developing the greenest and most efficient vehicle, a number of them are already doing what is perhaps the best option—plant more trees.

And these carmakers are on the right track. Planting trees have many positive impacts on the environment including the absorption of odors and pollutant gases (nitrogen oxides, ammonia, sulfur dioxide and ozone) and filter particulates out of the air by trapping them on their leaves and bark) that reduces cost.

Scientists blame the more severe rise in average global temperatures at least in part on the accumulation of carbon dioxide, methane and other heat-trapping greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, which are by products of automobiles, power plants and other fossil fuel burners.

To make the situation much worse, scientists also lamented the destruction of trees through hunting, which estimates about 5 percent of greenhouse gases every year.

Give something back

"Planting trees can offset climate change in part because they absorb carbon dioxide. This is the reason every year as we celebrate our inaugural anniversary, we have pledged to do an activity that would give something back to the environment," informed Isuzu Philippines Corp. president Shoji Takeda.

In 2002, IPC held an environmental show for the children of Silang and Sta. Rosa in Laguna and donated Mapua Engelings and river garbage traps to Laguna Lake the following year. In 2004, the company donated a two-classroom building to Bagumbayan High School and in 2005 created a mini-trails forest strip in Quezon province.

Last year, IPC went to Bataan to lead the planting of mangroves.

10th year

As IPC marks its 10th anniversary, Takeda announced that the company launched a nationwide park conservation campaign for the greening of premier parks in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

IPC marks its 10 anniversary by spearheading a parks conservation campaign starting with the Rizal Park in Manila.

CEBU Mayor Tomas Osmeña (standing) leads the annual planting rite joined by IPC's Bobnadi Gil (far left) and Takeda as well as Cebu First Lady Margot Osmeña and Cebu Vice Mayor Mike Rama.

Dubbed as the Isuzu Park Conservation Campaign '07, the first leg was held at the Rizal Park last August with Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, Department of Tourism Assistant Secretary Cynthia Guevara and National Parks Development Committee executive director Cadito Fajardo in attendance.

Aside from the plants donated, IPC also gave Rizal Park Visitors Mayor with environmental messages and waste receptacles.

Curiosity and the Cat

JAGUAR S-Type

PERHAPS LET ME SAY THAT IT'S NOT a luxury car guy. Those of you who've grown to know me over the last few years of this column have probably figured out that one already. Blame it on fault, the values of a vehicle is solely announced in the way it drives. Cars that don't perform well are just average; all as fluff and I have to admit that some brands do come across as just all talk and no doing.

MY DRIFT
Andre Fabina

Jaguar have always held me impressive as to what they are all about. Not merely a luxury brand, one cannot ignore this English marque's performance and motor sport heritage. Any company's value as a racing and performance car-making name at Le Mans and the guts to step into the Formula One ball ring must know what it's doing, right? The brand's perceived veneer of luxury and flash may actually be built on something substantial after all.

Introduction to Jaguar

After years of waiting, I've finally got to substantial test time in one of these cars from Coventry. A sparkling new S-Type would be my introduction to Jaguar and what the brand has to offer. How would a car that's been sidelining on in worldwide showrooms since 1999 fare against a driving palate spoilt by the abrupt showcases of technology and performance from the rest of the performance luxury par worrier?

First of all, the cockpit of the S-Type throws you off. Not purely performance oriented, there are some obvious concessions to comfort and, for the lack of a better word, luxury. There are probably fewer cars in the market clothed in more leather and covered in as much wood but there is something strangely enthralling about the execution of it all. It should be tacky but it isn't. This may be my first wood trimmed interior experience that passes muster.

Driving around the streets of Manila, as probably with most other urban locales in the world, the S-Type is an unremarkable ride. It is as if Ogilvy is drawn to the car by the gravity of its interior design, the chrome of the car's shapes and shadows. This is a car that asks to be stared at but there is a good reason for all the hoo. It is beautiful.

Performance comes by way of a 3.0-liter V6 that literally purrs while delivering 240 horses and 300 Nm of torque. Punch is sufficient and propels the rear and three quarters ass quite very well. There is no gainsaying to the six-speed automatic transmission; no paddles, no push buttons shifters, just a well geared unit that gives the car enough leverage both for highway speed and shuffling about in traffic.

Ride characteristics

Pointing the S-Type through its paces, the suspension makes an argument for both performance and comfort. In a driver, it strikes, more progressively sprung setup with better rebound would be ideal. Trouble is that Jaguars are often as much about those who are driven around as those who are at the wheel. Between the expectations of these two critical groups, the ride characteristics of the Jaguar are split almost equally. The result, truthfully, is a car whose handling is neither here nor there, no engine for us the faint driving, no bumps and fuzzy for those who prefer to sit in the back.

All in all, the experience of driving the S-Type was satisfying. Many questions were answered, some preconceived notions were quelled. While there are distances and more cutting edge luxury performance cars in the Philippine market today, this particular Jaguar will still hold its niche in the market. We find a car with a lingering performance heritage hidden under coachwork that is a trailblazer only in nomenclature reduction. But after all is said and done, I'm still not a luxury car guy.

BOSCH, racing development partner of Audi and Peugeot, developed the Pizza Diesel injector, clinching up the first-ever victory for diesel in the 24-hour LeMans.

The past's 'futuristic' vehicles coming alive now with Bosch

SINCE THE INTRODUCTION OF motion pictures, film producers have romanticized the concept of the flying car—from space vehicles and popular sci-fi flicks of the 1960s to the time-traveling DeLorean of "Back to the Future." And as the movie-going public the world over marveled at the sensational flying automobile, director Robert Zemeckis even included an on-board device called "Mr. Fusion" in the 87-TF sequel, which converts solid waste into spontaneous energy for the flying DeLorean.

A glimpse into the future? Perhaps. But it is not. But as more and more ideas are spawned by keepsidaled Hollywood writers, we come to realize that more is the desired future to those motion pictures. The modern-day automobile may not be as clean and efficient as say—George Jetson's flight pod—but there again, George Jetson never had to stuff of conversing with Warren Buffett.

To our 'green' Mr. Fusion

Back on the ground, the automobile is still arguably the most celebrating creation of the 20th century, and to which Robert Bosch technology has contributed—to great part—its pervasive and continuous innovation for safer mobility now producing cars that run on alternative fuels; and perhaps some day, even spontaneous combustion.

Modern innovations have seen the development of the 9-Cell Mercedes A-Class, which is powered by compressed hydrogen, and the BMW Hydrogen 7, which is based on the Bavarian manufacturer's 12-cylinder luxury sedan.

But long before committing a single unit of fuel, and even before trying to make it from point A to point B in a motorized wagon, one had to first figure out how to "start" (or ignite) the internal combustion engine, developed in 1886 by pioneers Gottlieb Daimler and Wilhelm Maybach who adapted the conception on a stagecoach—the world's first four-wheeled automobile.

That same year, fellow German inventor Robert Bosch invented the magneto—a device that, electrically "ignites" the engine, instead of physically "cranking" the vehicle from the outside—thus, paving the way for the birth of modern-day combustion electronics for automobiles.

From start to finish

At the turn of the century, Bosch went further to produce the first sparkplug, which up to now, remains the company's flagship product that has been produced over 1.8 billion times. Also since then, combustion has been the core business of the Bosch organization.

The euphoria of motorized transport was embraced by the world. But not so not on their hands, German ingenuity went back to the drawing board to explore even greater possibilities, setting standards in safety and efficiency that would be the global benchmark for fine automobiles.

Bosch registered a patent for the Antilock Braking System (ABS) as early as 1936 and commercially introduced the product in the 1970s, providing drivers complete control over steering while braking to avoid obstacles on the road. Today, approximately 75 percent of the world's cars are equipped with ABS, preventing more than 100,000 accidents and countless fatalities.

Following the ABS, and the introduction of the Traction Control System (TCS) in the 1980s, Bosch developed the Electronic Stability Program (ESP) in the 1990s, which consists of the functions of ABS and TCS and allows engines to control the vehicle from skidding. When ESP detects that the vehicle is about to skid, it instantly reduces the engine output and specifically brakes single or several wheels, therefore, keeping the vehicle on course.

As of late, the US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has passed a provision mandating all passenger cars in the US must be gradually equipped with the ESP by Year 2012.

Bosch has further established the reputation of German technology by introducing the first common-rail diesel injection that provide cleaner and more efficient combustion in a car's fuel, 10 years ago today. Since then, Bosch has produced more than 33 million common-rail systems. The company also developed the Piezo—high-pressure injectors that brought the first-ever victory for a diesel powered car in the history of LeMans.

Innovating for the future

German cars fuel from a long, proud tradition of automotive excellence, boosted outstanding marques have emerged through the years. Mercedes-Benz, from Stuttgart, BMW from Bavaria, Audi from Ingolstadt, Porsche from Baden-Württemberg, and Volkswagen from Wolfsburg are among those that have caught many attentive car lovers and enhancements (no winter surprises that of the Rome).

In a scene from "Be Cool in 2005," Chili Palmer (played by John Travolta) was scuffed by a sports car owner for driving around in a hybrid. "If you're important, people will wait for you," says Palmer. Green perspective, however, fuel-efficiency and clean emissions need not be sluggish.

Innovative concepts like the Bosch Clean Diesel components reduce fuel consumption by 30 percent (against gasoline) and 25 percent less CO_2 emissions while in demanding, normal conditions the engine's displacement but produces more power through turbocharging.

Other developments include Night Vision, an on-board monitor that allows drivers to see clearly at night; Start-Stop System, which automatically controls fuel consumption during city traffic, and the Automatic Park Assistant, which "virtually parallel-parks"—automatically parks cars.

Asmodi Imperium Cecilio-company these current trends are rapidly moving toward that direction. And just when the age of technology has raised the comfort level of today's motorists, these innovations aspire to fulfill a desire need even before they are conceived.

And finally, to raise an argument whether the DeLorean (will it fly again in "Back to the Future 4"?) or The Jetson's flying car is more efficient—Dr. Ernest Stavro finds the DeLorean with scraps, while George Jetson...well, no one has ever really caught him gassing up. Stavros DeLorean is because man have made a public procedure as cold fusion. For that's another story.

RIGHT vision is an on-board monitor that allows drivers to see farther than the car's headlights.

Motorists get more value in Seaoil's LangiSulit

WITH THE HIGH COST OF FUEL AND maintenance, owning a motor vehicle is getting harder each day.

This is why Seaoil Philippines, the country's homegrown oil company, is launching a campaign to help car owners get more value from their money.

Dubbed LangiSulit, a combination of "langit" (oil) and "sulit" (great value), the campaign will give customers no-nonsense products and reliable customer care.

Ease financial burden

Seaoil president Glenn Ng said the campaign aims to ease the financial burden of car owners.

"By giving them discounts, our customers can have more purchasing power," he said.

"Seaoil customers know good products and know a great deal when they see one and for them, Seaoil's fuels and lubricants give better value for their hard-earned cash."

Pioneering efforts

Seaoil has been repeatedly cited by the Department of Energy for its pioneering efforts in promoting clean-burning fuels at lower prices.

Its GS Extreme gasoline, for instance, carries a higher octane rating than most premium gasoline brands yet is being sold at regular gasoline prices.

Seaoil's lubricants—Geo Extreme for gasoline and Dexmax for diesel engines—are also substantially cheaper than similar products of other companies.

"With the LangiSulit campaign, we are enabling our customers to have more savings," he noted.

To avail of LangiSulit discounts, simply go to any of the 114 Seaoil outlets all over the country. For more information, log on to www.seaoil.com.ph.

Toyota offers 2005 Innova rear axle special service campaign

IN LINE WITH ITS COMMITMENT TO customer satisfaction, product quality and safety, Toyota is pleased to announce its special service campaign for identified Innova (our models 2005), which were produced between February and December 2005.

The company, during runs, has identified a batch of rear axles, which may not meet its durability standards. While no failures have occurred in the market, purely as a precaution, Toyota will replace the rear axles with a brand-new and improved parts, free of charge.

Engineer Wenlino Manawal, vice president for Customer Service Operations, said, "Toyota believes in providing our valued customers with vehicles of outstanding quality, safety and value. We are also committed to give your cars the best maintenance services for a pleasurable and worry-free driving experience. We wish to thank our Innova customers who have already availed of our special service campaign and we would like to invite our other remaining customers for a service appointment at their nearest authorized dealers."

For any inquiries, please call Toyota Customer Interface Assistance Center at 870-2932 or your dealer's service department.

Parks conservation . . .

Turn to page B3

DPC executives and Manila City officials celebrate the dove as a symbol of the company's 10th anniversary.

"We would like to thank the Germans, especially those who have patronized our vehicles...the Alfieris, the D. Mas, the Transwind, the Isuzu trucks and buses," Takeda said.

Rahmadini agreed saying that the growing of the Ecotour Ometria Park is in line with DPC's corporate philosophy called safety, security, environment-friendliness or the SEE philosophy.

He explained that the SEE technology is what drives the company to manufacture environment-friendly diesel engines and continue to develop greener vehicles that have the least possible impact on the environment and the health of the people.

For the Diesel leg of the Park Conservation Campaign '05', Isuzu brands as Davao City this month.

Goodyear launches 'Bayani ng Kalsada' sticker campaign

GOODYEAR PHILIPPINES INC. (GPI) recently kicked off the "Bayani ng Kalsada" sticker campaign, an important road safety project that reminds motorists to become safe drivers to responsible drivers but also heroes to their own way.

Launched at the Goodyear 16.5m Performance Center in Las Piñas, the sticker campaign was also conducted at Plaza Moriones in Manila, SO Bayan and Cubao Roundup in Makati and Marco Tires in Cebu City. This activity seeks to further promote Bayani ng Kalsada, an annual nationwide search that aims to promote stories of courage and extraordinary service while paying tribute to the unsung heroes on the road.

Honor exceptional deeds

"Creating greater awareness on this program will serve as an opportunity to honor more exceptional deeds of drivers who are worthy of being called Bayani ng Kalsada, as well as pave the way for more orderly and safer roads. We at Goodyear would like to promote our corporate value of safety, inherent road and driver safety, environmental safety, or workplace safety," Goodyear president and managing director Jose Maria said.

All drivers are invited to participate in the sticker campaign, which will be held in various areas in Metro Manila and provinces until November this year. Included in the scheduled venues are Mike Antequet in Davao City, 31, Cubao Quezon (Dec. 11), Goodyear Pampanga (Oct. 26) and Goodyear Quezon Avenue (Dec. 16).

Nationwide program

Bayani ng Kalsada is a nationwide program developed by Goodyear to feature, honor and publicize those drivers who display quality to be proclaimed "heroes." Now on its second year, the search is open to anyone, including transport associations, and car clubs, who wish to nominate a "Target Pinoy," representing drivers of public utility vehicles, trucks and private cars.

Nomination forms are available at Goodyear first-class dealers and TyrePro outlets nationwide, and car clubs, Transportation Office (LTO) branches, Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board offices, selected Caltex stations, as well as at the offices of Filtrepreneur Franchise and Centre Singapore.

Entries may be submitted at Goodyear first-class dealers and TyrePro outlets nationwide, or via mail at P.O. Box 7260, Ermin-ia Airport, Manila or P.O. Box 3366 M.C.P.O., Makati City. Forms may also be sent via fax at the Goodyear office (635-4596), or at the secretariat (893-7949), or even email at www.goodyear.com.ph/bayani. You may also nominate through SMS—text BNK to register and send to 2299. Deadline of submission of entries is on Dec. 31.

Categories, prizes

The contest has four categories: public utility jeepney drivers, taxi/FX drivers, commercial truck/bus drivers and private drivers. Each winner will receive P50,000 cash prize, P100,000 worth of personal accident insurance, P25,000 worth of gas coupons, P20,000 worth of SM Home Appliance, final cast with P5000 worth of products, P10,000 worth of training certificate, Reviews Store gift pack, plaque, as well as a Bayani ng Kalsada special jacket, cap and sticker.

In addition to LTO, DTHD and BSTC, the campaign is also supported by SM Appliance Center, Cubao Philippines, Standard Insurance, Filrepreneur Franchise Inc., Centre Singapore Inc., Reviews Forte, Manila Bulletin, eGames, Philippine Star Signum, 98.5FM and 1121WM.

Driving tips for the rainy days

KIMBY TOY STEEL EDITOR

Avoid losing control of your vehicle while driving during a rainy day and the roads are wet? During the rainy season, a lot of accidents should have been avoided. What are the different things to remember when driving during a rainy day?

First, because the roads are wet, ease off the accelerator and slow down gradually. When the vehicle's speed is too fast, this will decrease your ability to steer properly and to use the brakes when there are slow vehicles in front.

Use your headlights and hazard warning lights when visibility is seriously reduced so that other drivers can easily see your presence. Leave a bigger gap or safe following distance between your vehicle and the vehicle in front to see roads. If the two-second gap is the rule under ordinary circumstances, during bad weather, the gap should be at 4 seconds during a rainy day. Avoid tailgating especially if visibility is poor due to heavy rains.

Wet roads dangerous

Slowing down on wet roads will allow you to take control of your vehicle. Wet roads are dangerous especially when there is a series of curves. A cruising speed on wet roads will prevent your tires from gripping the road and maintain the "control-speed factor" that allows your vehicle to stay on the curves. The rain and spray from other vehicles will make it difficult to see vehicles in front.

Second, regularly maintain your vehicle especially your windshield's wiper blades, brakes and tires. Make sure your wipers are working. Change your worn-out tires and regularly examine the tread of the tires, checking if it is thick enough to withstand wet roads.

All these tips can be found in the first-ever hands-free reference publications for motorists that help improve their driving habits published by Followays Management Corp., the operator of the North Luzon Expressway.

Caring for your classic

Car care chart

Transmission fluid				
Brake fluid				
Oil				
Filter				
Coolant				
Power steering fluid				
Battery				
Air filter				
Engine oil filter				
Exhaust				
Brakes				
Tires				
Lights				
Wheel alignment/balancing				
Belts				
Hoses				
Windshield wipers				
Suspension				

The O&M of a tollway

From page B2-4

Renewal

When the PNCC's franchise to operate the SLEX/Skyway expired last May, it applied for a franchise renewal with Congress. The TRB granted the PNCC-led Operation Certificate good for one year while the PNCC's franchise renewal application is pending in Congress.

At the same time, the TRB—heeding numerous complaints from the motoring public about the PNCC's crappy services and overplaying with the former administration's drive to privatize GOCCs (government-owned and controlled corporations)—offered the O&M of the SLEX/Skyway to Citra by the end of this year. Citra will reportedly form a new organization or take over after screening interested PNC employees and retaining the good ones. A generous compensation package of two and a half months' pay for every year of service is being offered to those who are not retained.

Protest rally

However, the PNC employees' union objected to the screening and rejected the package. Last month, the union staged mounting a protest rally after office hours every day in front of the Bonifacio interchange ramps which are located near the PNC building. Although the drivers are impeding traffic flow at the Bonifacio interchange, the union's leaders have announced plans to hold more rallies in front of the Citra office in the Ortigas area.

If the settlement is reached the PNC union will quizzed its protest rallies to the other toll plazas, thus traffic jams on the SLEX/Skyway will get even more hellish. Talk about total disregard for the gross inconvenience and delay inflicted on the motoring public! Not to mention the thousands of liters of precious fuel wasted each day in stalled traffic. It only goes to show that the O&M of a tollway is better left in the private sector, as adequately proven at the North Luzon Expressway by the Manila North Tollways Corp.

###

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: I started out with nothing and still have most of it left.

YOUNGBLOOD³

Edited by Jorge V. Anuta and Ruel S. De Vera

P395 book paper P150 newsprint

Now available from National Book Store and PowerBooks.

Co-published by

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SPASA

MOTORING

The O&M of a tollway

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

DAYS BEFORE THE FIRST "BER" MONTH heralding the approach of the Christmas season arrived, the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) and the Skyway had already begun to become huge parking lots. And it's not only during the rush hours that traffic on the SLEX and Skyway slows to an inch-by-inch crawl or comes to a complete stop. I am one of tens of thousands of long-suffering motorists who have experienced stop-and-go traffic—gridlock going south even at 10 p.m. or midnight.

The Philippine Skyway Corp. (PSC), a subsidiary of the government-owned Philippine National Construction Corp., points at the ongoing repair of the Alabang viaduct as the source of the horrendous traffic jams. But is that the real and only reason?

Mandated

The fact that the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) has mandated the turnover of the D&B operation and maintenance of the SLEX/Skyway to a private concessionaire at the end of the year must have something to do with it. The impending takeover has upset many PSC employees and may be affecting the quality of their service. Not that the quality of PSC service has been all that good. On the contrary, the D&B of the SLEX/Skyway has been the subject of many motorists' complaints.

For 10 years now, the PSC has operated the SLEX/Skyway, which has a traffic volume averaging 175,000 motor vehicles a day and a daily revenue of around P10 million. Naturally, no corporation—especially a government-owned one (parent company PNCC is an attached agency of the Department of Public Works and Highways)—would like to let go of an easy-money-raking-in 10-million-bucks a day.

38 years

The PNCC, originally a private company named Construction and Development Corp. (CDCP) owned by businessman Rodolfo Cuenca, began building and operating the South Luzon highway in 1967. In 1977, President Marcos, through a Presidential Decree, granted a 30-year franchise for the PNCC to construct, operate and maintain a tollway covering Luzon from Sorsogon in the south to Laoag in the north (including Tollgate to what was known then as the Greater Manila Area).

After Edsa 1 and the fall of Marcos, the SLEX was taken over by the government. When the PNCC could not completely implement the construction component of its franchise, it turned to joint ventures with private businesses. The PNCC formed a partnership with Citra Metro Manila Tollways Corp., a private construction-to-tollside company, to build the Skyway. It entered the D&B thereof. The PNCC also partnered with RFO Capital, a private Malaysian firm, to improve the Alabang-Calamba stretch of the SLEX.

YOKOHAMA

We'll take you to the 54th Macau Grand Prix!

Fast Lane to the Grand Prix

Witness breathtaking speed and daredevil swerves in Macau this November. Yokohama, the official tire supplier for the 54th Macau Grand Prix, is giving away an all-expenses-paid trip to witness the action.

Grand prize includes rounding an isle to Macau, hotel accommodations with meals (November 17-20, 2007) and VIP passes to the biggest motoring event in the east.

Yokohama: Tires to power your life. Tires to drive you to Macau.

Promo runs from September 1 to October 31, 2007. See posters for details.

TRANSPORT TRIVIA

By Emman Cruz

Earth-friendly jeepneys

NOT ONLY ARE THEY MORE GORGEOUS and glamorous than the ordinary jeepneys ruling our streets. They are, they say, healthier. So what makes an electronic jeepney or "e-jeepney" a healthy option?

It was only two months back since the first units rolled off the streets of Makati to test their endurance and robustness. One electric jeepney is owned by Pasig resident Ana, mind you, for did you know what sets it apart from the ubiquitous jeepneys we have around?

The Greenpeace says those China-made vehicles will run on batteries charged overnight by a power plant. Excited by the green potential, Ana the organic mama. They will mitigate climate change stemming away from the emissions fumes of diesel-guzzlers. Whoa.

Powered by the horsepower electric motor engines with 12 batteries, they say that at full capacity the vehicles can run 120 to 140 kilometers or around 40 kph on an eight-hour charge. The only setback is that e-jeeps are a bit pricey compared to with ordinary ones. Each e-jeepney runs at least P600,000, around P150,000 more than the normal cost.

So, should we go healthy now?

The e-jeepney project is led by the Green Renewable Independent Power Producer (GRIPP) Inc., a network of anti-coalmy groups, business sector, local government units and socio-oriented groups.

The electric jeepney

"E-jeepneys" being sought to replace diesel-fueled jeepneys in the Philippines to ease air pollution problem

Capacity: 12-14

In operation: Six jeeps on trial years in pipeline to import 300

Made: China

	To run (daily)	To build
Electric jeepney	$3.5 electricity	$11,000
Ordinary jeepney	$15.8 diesel fuel	$14,000

Engine: Electric motor engines with 12 batteries runs 40 kph

Batteries: Charged for max. 10 hours on ordinary 220-volt power sockets

Plans in existence for recharging station that generates power from household waste

LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Batali-Formoso

Chief of Correspondents: Pam Pastor

24/7 "To be you" "To be you"

"SWEETEST Thank You," courtesy of Tess Fulo

Project Gratitude

TOBLERONE marketing manager Jandy Ilpisan values the CD tracks.

By Niño Mark N. Sablan
Inquirer Correspondent

THE PHILIPPINES IS world-renowned for having the most welcoming, most accommodating and most hospitable people. Then how do we explain the shocking news that, in a recent study conducted by Reader's Digest, Metro Manila ranked among the least courteous cities in the world?

An integral part of the test was to check if the city residents constantly say "thank you" and, having an ear over the line, the Filipinos have apparently forgotten these core words.

Blame it on how fast-paced our lives have become, to the point of not hearing the time to say "thank you" anymore. Blame it on forgetful sense, rhythm or plain nonchalance. Whatever the cause of the thank-you absence is, one thing is for sure: Manila is making a huge comeback this Oct. 20.

Saddened and bothered by how Filipinos are showing less courtesy and gratitude nowadays, Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim and Vice Mayor Isko Moreno have taken the initiative in declaring Oct. 20 National Thank You Day by signing a city ordinance at the Manila City Hall, making the city of Manila the pioneering city to declare a "Thank You Day" in the country.

According to Mayor Lim, expressing gratitude is still given great value in the Filipino culture and that with the National Thank You Day, the habit of saying "thank you" will be battered, also reminding everyone of the special people in our night have been forgetting to thank.

The National Thank You Day is a partnership between the city of Manila and Swiss chocolate brand, Toblerone, which has become a sentimental token of gratitude. Jandy Ilpisan, Toblerone marketing manager, "Toblerone has played a role in making people feel that kindness is valued. We are happy to be Mayor Lim's partner in his efforts to bring back the sense of gratitude in Manila."

And they are certainly not alone in this thanks movement. Several private enterprises such as Bally Project, Time Depot, Royal Hanbin, Fully Booked, Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf, Flowers Express, All Flip Flops, Daniel & Gallardo and T-Bao have all joined in team-ups to underscore the fundamental value of expressing gratitude.

The grateful-ness campaign is

PROJECT 23

FOR POLLS, downloadables and National Thank You Day updates, visit www.thankyouday.philippines.com

A Reader's Digest survey says Filipinos are among the least courteous people in the world for failing to say 'thank you.' A movement seeks to change that

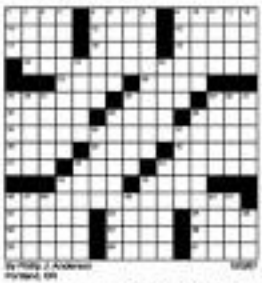
VENTURE 7
Christmas Bazaar 2007
October 7, 2007 (Sunday)
Hotel Intercontinental Manila
9:00am - 7:00pm
FOR INQUIRIES, PLEASE CALL 843-0007/ 810-3307/ 810-0860 (LIBERTY); 357-3085/84 / 0915-7985109
WATCH OUT FOR OUR NEXT X'MAS BAZAAR on Nov. 10 at the Renaissance Makati City Hotel (formerly New World) and Dec. 2 at the Hotel Interconti

A diaryo novela by CARLO J. CAPARAS

To have and to hold

Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA

DAILY CROSSWORD



CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

9	5	6						
7			5			2		
2		3		4		9	5	
	3			7				
		2	4		5	1		
				2			7	
		5		8		6		1
	8				6			5
6						4	9	8

Difficulty Level ★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

HOROSCOPE

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Project gratitude

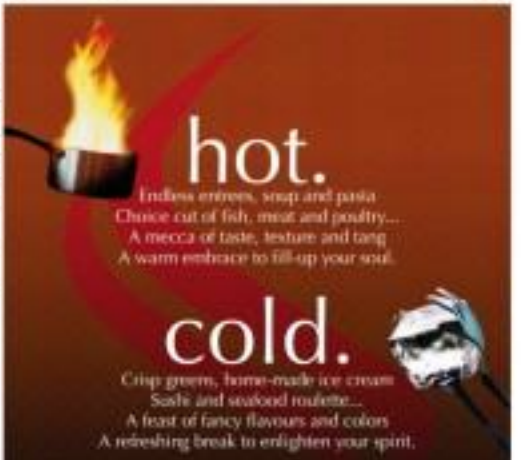
From page C1

already on full blast mode. Renowned lifestyler Rose Albert designed special Thank You cards for the event and they are available at all Thank You Centers sprinkled in the metro. There is also the official National Thank You Day website... www.thankyoudayphilip pines.com—where there are polls, downloadables and event updates.

Also available in the site are original event songs of gratitude composed by radio's bonsai musical acts especially for the campaign. "Temperamen Tempers" by Cynthia Alexander, "Sweetest Thank You" by Bao Bolik, "Purple Colored Skies" by Martin, "Bonic" by Imonbros, "Sweet" by Aallaolbea and "Let's Get Together" by Reggae Rhapsons. And there is absolutely no need to worry about infringing upon copyrights; anyone is more than welcome to download all these compositions. Now that's something to be thankful for.

The National Thank You Day is on Oct. 20 at the SM Mall of Asia will be a huge celebration filled with concerts, celebrities, musical performances, Eddievone surprises and, of course, gratitude. With the goal of reviving the lost art of visually expressing gratitude and making Metro Manila a more appreciative and grateful city, how can you not be part of the movement?

E-mail the author at timmarkalan@yahoo.com



HEALTHY... ACTIVE LIFESTYLE

Information for Living Right

Question

Don't sugary carbonated soft drinks offer only empty calories and lack any real nutritional value? Do sugar-free soft drinks cause weight gain?

Answer

No to both questions; besides basic hydration, carbonated soft drinks can also provide carbohydrate fuel that supplies energy necessary for daily activities. All beverages can have a place in a well-balanced diet. Carbonated soft drinks can help quench your thirst and help provide your body with its daily fluid needs, but they should not be the only beverage you consume. What matters most is that your diet includes nutrients from a variety of foods and beverages, and that you watch

your total calorie intake.

In fact, the phrase "empty calories" is a very misleading and incorrect description. To your body, all calories count. As long as you balance the calories you take in with the calories you burn, any food or beverage can be part of a healthy, enjoyable diet. People can choose the type of soft drink that best suits their tastes and calorie needs, carbonated soft drinks are now available in several calorie levels: no-calorie, low-calorie, reduced-calorie and regular-calorie.

Studies have also shown that low-calorie and no-calorie sweeteners can help in weight management and are associated with high-quality diets. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has stated that low-calorie soft drinks can play a positive role in weight management.

For many people, children's soft drink consumption also raises additional issues about nutrition, but many of the concerns don't pan out:

- Two national surveys show that soft drinks are not associated with kids being overweight, having a poor-quality diet or having low physical activity.
- A study of 1,235 boys and girls aged 12 to 15 who regularly drank carbonated soft drinks found they had sufficient milk intakes to have strong bones.
- No relationship between soft drink consumption and obesity was found in a study of more than 190,000 school-aged children in 34 countries.

The bottom line is that soft drinks can be part of a balanced diet, and the calories you consume should not be greater than the calories you use if you want to maintain a healthy weight.

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Alex Cabagnot

No Health Rookie

Being a basketball player isn't just about having "game." Of course, you have to have a couple of dunning moves, or know a few plays. But it's not just about the right shoes or having access to all of basketball's latest gear. It's about how you carry yourself when you are on the court. Like most things in life, it's about inside that counts. Just ask the Philippine Basketball Association's most promising player, Omar Cielo "Jigo" Alex Cabagnot.

At a kid, Alex already knew he wanted to be a basketball player. That's why early on, he took his basketball training very, very seriously. "I joined a lot of basketball clinics when I was young. I think it's a key statement to new basketball camps to keep your fundamentals, and just know the basic skills while you're young."

With that early change attitude, it's now wonder Alex is at the top of his game. But do you know that the secret to his amazing court skills only half-lives in one thing? It's actually something that everybody can possess, whenever you are in school or your profession or health.

Alex believes in living a balanced, healthy and active lifestyle as well. "His includes practicing their key values: eating a balanced diet, regular physical activity and proper behavior. There are things that you already know, but every time you think about it, you have a chance or time to do them. You just need the right attitude and some will power to get healthier and live a long life. It's not that hard, really."

Eating a balanced diet doesn't mean you have to drastically cut down the foods you eat. Rather, it means you have to eat the right amount of foods that provide your body with different energy sources and minerals. What is actually needs is eating a wide variety of foods to meet your daily calories and nutritional needs. Such foods are a must: "Make sure you have fish oil or leaf combinations of food and consume eating. The key here is balance, not too much and not too little."

Feeling sluggish and tired all the time? You need to get physical this season! Alex values regular physical activity like the power to take up a sport or be active. That's but till some people have yet to see time these days there are actually many other things you can do. Why not go biking or walking with your family? Get your friends to join you for a jog around the block, in fact, basketball shouldn't be the only sport you play and swapping can help you burn calories too. Anything to get your body moving, sweating and burning calories. Just remember to get an hour to an hour and a half of physical activity everyday.

This is one BIG value that also takes to heart this week. "Physical activity is really important now to have a healthy and active lifestyle. You don't just want to be a couch potato to just watch TV. A good tactic is always a good thing whether it's just running, playing basketball, or playing with your friends, it's very important."

Lastly, the third BIG value is something that most people tend to forget about, which is a big mistake. This is because it's actually one of the most important aspects of health. Sufficient is simply means the proper amount of foods in your body. If you're deficient, it means you need to drink more or you don't feel thirsty or hungry.

But hold on a second, if you're thinking that the old "8 glasses a day" rule still applies, read on. According to the Beverage Institute for Health and Wellness (BIHW) website, you actually need 11-16 cups of water! Both cool-to-the-touch up, weight, gender, the weather and level of physical activity. Think also some that you don't need to drink to just water. Although it's important that you do drink H2O, you can also drink your favorite soft drinks, tea and juices to stay hydrated. Foods with water like soups, stews, fruits and vegetables can help too.

So, Metrosexuals, make time to drink! Avoid dehydration by keeping some H2O handy at all times. If you don't, you get tummy and you can't get those with your best abilities. So you're always set to drink a lot of water and have a lot of fluids in your body because you lose so much when you play. You have to replenish what you lose."

Alex also has some words of advice for budding basketball players: "Make sure you're ready when you are healthy, stay away from all the bad stuff that you can do. But most and most of all, that and listen to your coaches. You can never go wrong with that."

Or else metrosexuals everyone to start living a balanced, healthy and active lifestyle today. To more information about your health and fitness needs, log on to the BIHW website or www.thehivinglounge.org.

This page is brought to you by:

A DEAR DEER. Wish Disney. P1,250

DR. SEUSS. P1,250; Dr. Seuss, P1,250; Disney, P795; Mighty Fine, P1,250

SHOP SHOOTERS

Tee time

SUPER SEUSS. Dr. Seuss. P1,250

By Pam Pastor
Photos by Rudy Espero

THE T-SHIRT TREND HAS BEEN ON a steady rise for a while now—and it's one that we are loving.

Screaming and rocky bikinis have been used to be relinquished as everyone's closets have been replaced with items from our childhood—the bands, My Little Pony, Rainbow Brite, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, characters from Dr. Seuss, Sesame Street and Disney and even our favorite video games.

Familiar brands that bring back memories have started printing T-shirt upon you—Pop Tarts, Swiss Miss, Lifesavers, Reese's, even Bloor's Chas.

And the best part about these shirts is they're also soft...which makes you feel as though you're really raided your childhood closet.

But since our childhood closets only exist in our heads now, we've worked for the next best thing. We raided Heaven's and found a lot of shirts under the brands Mighty Fine, Alive, New Breed, Disney and Dr. Seuss. They give a double dose of comfort and nostalgia that you can pull over your head.

These ultra-soft, ultra-comfy shirts will make you feel as though you've raided your childhood closet

NEW Breed, P895; Mighty Fine, P1,250; Dr. Seuss, P795; Alive, P1,650; New Breed, P895; Alive, P1,650

Perfect timing

CCM watches are original and dynamic but minimalist

AWARD-WINNING EB101 watch resembles a stylish bangle.

By Mike Mark M. Sablan
Staff Correspondent

ONCE UPON A TIME, WATCHES were purchased, worn and used mainly for time-telling. Amazingly, watches have now evolved into trendy accessories that just happen to also tell the time.

But while a flashy, attention-grabbing and unique statement seems high among today's norms, nothing can beat a time-teller that scores high on the technological side as well.

Enter CCM, a domestic designer watch brand that was established in 1999. Inspired by originality, dynamism and minimalism—hence the brand name—it boasts of timepieces that are innovative in both technology and design. In fact, CCM reveals, "Since its inception in 2006 it has been at the forefront of innovative technology and its importance is into the designs."

He adds, "Every day we come up with new designs." In fact, according to Frank, Mime would not sleep up any time of the day and when they do, they hold sudden meetings to talk about the suggestions and even to mostly develop them.

And how these fresh ideas have paid off.

As an international brand, CCM is the first ever Hong Kong watch brand to participate in Baselworld (a 100) Since then, the brand has been continuously taking part in this world-wide event along with other world-class brand names.

With innovation as one of the brand's cutting points, there's no wonder how CCM has also won various international recognitions such as China's iF Design Award, Germany's Reddot Design Award, and the USA and Japan Good Design Award, which have all encouraged the brand to further create even more groundbreaking designs.

From time also, CCM watches are in limited-some-styles.

Take, for example, the DD101 model, which, with its wide bracelet and vibrant colors, never fails to catch everyone's eyes.

And then there is also the award-winning ODM 3D101 watch. Apart from looking more like a stylish bangle, it also boasts of innovative technology through its curved glass panel for the watch face. After all, most watch faces are rectangularly flat.

Frank adds that in the last five years, the Philippines has been changing a lot when it comes to fashion sense and trend response. Frank even thinks the country is just a couple of years behind the very fashion-forward Japan.

With the remarkable success achieved by the brand in Asia, its next goal is to penetrate the European and American markets. At present, CCM has a distribution network that reaches more than 30 countries, plus two overseas offices in Paris and Singapore for expanding market presence in these regions.

With its wide array of unique, vivid and attention-grabbing watches, CCM is the perfect watch brand for unique individuals who want to be a step ahead or a notch higher in both design and technology. Aimed to do-nother the target market of CCM, Frank answers, "Fashionable, trendy, innovative. If you want to be that person, you have to buy CCM."

CCM timepieces are available at all 3 Timemachine stores and selected specialty stores nationwide.

FRANK Lam, CCM international sales and marketing manager

DD100 watch is available in various colors.

E-mail the author at timemarkmichael@yahoo.com

Dengue Disclosed

The eye opening truth about Dengue

Many things jeopardize our family's safety and health. Most are within plain sight and are easily spotted. One of the most fatal is the deadly disease known as Dengue.

Dengue is contracted when an Aedes Aegypti mosquito bites. The Aedes mosquito is small and can get to almost anywhere in your home and lay eggs. Not only is it hard to keep these wild insects away it also can lay eggs in unexpected places and pose as a threat to your family's well being.

One female mosquito says up to 100 eggs at a time, all of which can hatch in the same day. Eggs can be dormant in dry conditions for up to 6 months, hatching long after the rainy season has ended. This heightens the possibility of your child getting bitten. Since this disease is a year round threat we must be vigilant not just during the rainy season but all year round.

Dengue in the Philippines

According to The World Health Organization (WHO) there are about 50 million Dengue cases a year and over 500,000 cases of the fatal Dengue hemorrhagic fever. Dengue is one of the leading causes of childhood deaths in Asia. In the Philippines, 36,712 infections were reported in 2006 alone.

The humid and damp tropical weather in the Philippines makes it conducive to breeding for the Aedes Aegypti mosquito which breeds in clean stagnant water. Water that may be in pails, flower pots, gutters, vases and buckets commonly flourish over the house.

Dengue is also not readily spotted in children because it exhibits the same symptoms as the flu, like high fever, head and joint aches, nausea, fatigue and pain behind the eyes. The fever is inconsistent making parents believe that it's just a regular case of the flu. Small blood vessels are the infection. It unleashes Dengue fever into cells hemorrhage fever and become fatal.

Your Family's Best Defense against Dengue

SC Johnson, the world's leading pest control expert, has a formidable range of Baygon and OFF! products to help ensure your family's health and well-being:

- Baygon Mosquito Killer aerosol guarantees fastest knockdown. It is an effective instant acting spray that lets you get to the hard to reach places where mosquitoes lurk. Like before the sink, behind appliances and corners, under the bed and in closets. Spray twice a day - in dawn and dusk when the Aedes Aegypti is most active.
- Baygon Liquid Mosquito Repeller provides continuous protection indoors for up to 20 square meters from where it is plugged. It used it issues a way to ward away mosquitoes away for up to 30 days.
- Baygon Electric Mosquito Killer eliminates mosquitoes the worry free way. An alternative to this coil it simply plugs into the wall and gets rid of mosquitoes.
- Baygon Scented Coil keeps mosquitoes at bay. Aside from indoors it can also be used outdoors where plugs are not present like in gardens and verandas where mosquitoes thrive. It has a pleasing lavender scent that is easy on the nose but tough on mosquitoes.
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ENTERTAINMENT

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Miss Eco Low Cut Shoot

Miss RP Int'l in best form

By Aveen Adina

FILIPINO-JORDANIAN NADIA [illegible] Gee Hussni—model, radio jock, dancer and photographer—is out to add another entry to her long list of occupations.

The 19-year-old native of Lucena left for Tokyo, Japan, on Sept. 30 to compete for the Miss International title, which she has been held by Philippine beauties Precious Lara Quigaman (2005), Melanie Marquez (1979), Aurora Pijuan (1970) and Gemma Cruz (1964).

"I have butterflies in my stomach now," Nadia revealed during her send-off at the Sofitel Philippine Plaza Manila, where she displayed her winning form. "I've seen the pictures of the other contestants. They are all so beautiful and everyone has a big chance to win. That is why I am asking for your prayers and support."

After her coronation as Binibining Pilipinas International in March, the 5-foot-9 beauty lost almost 10 pounds, thanks to her strict diet and regular gym visits and Pilates sessions.

"I hope to become the 10th Filipina to bring home the title," said Nadia, who was crowned Miss Philippines-Air in 2005.

Nadia, who has joined a host of national and regional beauty tilts, continued to bring more acclaim to her training for Miss International.

As part of her grooming, she was made to take lessons to cat walk, poise, projection and even makeup application from Miss World 2003 Unlimited Queen of Beauty Karla Barretto, Miss Universe 2005 photogenic winner Gionna Cabrera and former title holders Karen Agustin, Venus Maria Ignacio and Gionella Lou Echanove.

She was also given an overview of the international competition and pointers on how to catch the attention of the judges.

PAGE D9 [illegible]

Every part of this int'l star's body art tells a story . . .

. . . but not that one where then-teen star Miss Makiah pulled him over at the audience and onto the stage of "That's Entertainment." Ruby Ewen embellished he could do, and the 4-year-old sang "Born in the USA." Now, 21 years later, he's made a CD in France, Belgium, Germany, and Switzerland. PAGE G 04

Opening Today

Taloo

Stars Irma Adlawan, Diana Mahilum, Shamaine Buencamino, Ricky Davao, Soliman Cruz, Sid Lucero, Ping Medina.

Directed by Jerrold Tarog

Inspired by the Agatha Christie short story "Death by Drowning," this ensemble drama unveils the complex in this year's Cinemalaya. A lady cop (Buencamino) investigates the death of a hottie (Lucero) and discovers the conflicting passions (and sinister motives) of the people around her. Gio Zobarte, Cinemalaya juror, calls it "a thoroughly engaging mystery." Exclusively in Solaris, Robinsons Galleria.

Evening

Stars Claire Danes, Meryl Streep, Eileen Atkins, Vanessa Redgrave, Toni Collette

Directed by Lajos Koltai

Based on a novel by Susan Minot, this drama focuses on a woman's memories as recounted on her deathbed. Amy Stanwell of Readers Circle describes it as "a poignant and luminous showcase of acting talent." Carlos Chronicle of Los Angeles Times says "it hinges between the intense and the sentimental."

OPENING D3

Miss RP Int'l in best form

the audience and her fellow contestants.

But not everything went as planned. For almost a year, the international organizer banned about a month-long competition in Ise-Ise Hall hosts in Japan and China, only to announce very late into the homestretch that Miss International delegates will only spend two weeks in Tokyo and the coronation night will be held in Japan on Oct. 13 and not in China on Oct. 20 as earlier announced.

The confusion notwithstanding, Nadia expressed excitement on her first trip abroad. "I will tell my fellow countrymen and the Japanese people that the Philippines is a beautiful country. Blessed with magnificent beach-

THE MODEL is also a radio-jock, dancer and photographer.

es, tropical fruits and warm people."

And despite all the negative publicity the country has been getting in international media, "it is a wonderful country to visit," she added.

Nadia brings with her to Tokyo encouragement from her fellow Binibining Pilipinas beauties Anna Theresa Licaros, Miss Universe 2007 Miss Photogenic, said, "Believe in yourself and have fun," Miss World 2007 delegate Margaret Wilson added, "I'm proud of you. I know you can do it!"

Miss International's theme for this year is building a harmonious world, with focus on environmental awareness.

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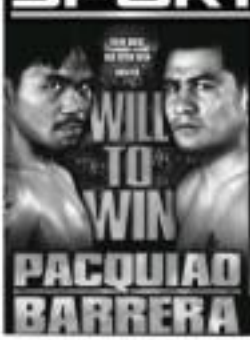

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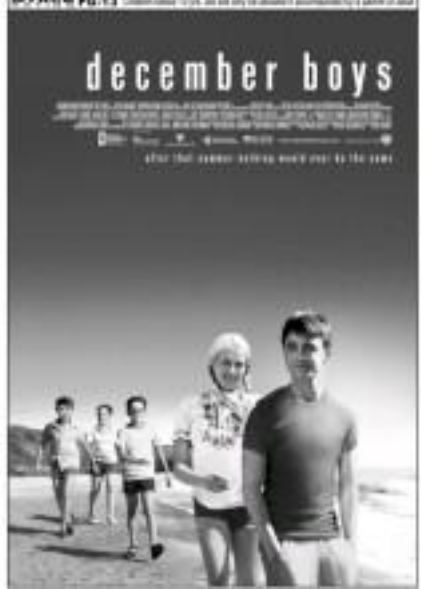

OPENING TODAY

Unusual TV shows catch viewers' kooky fancy

Pretzeage D1

Roger Ebert of Chicago Sun-Times agrees: "[It] creeps through the first-hour paces so pitilessly as an underwater."

December Boys

Stars: Daniel Radcliffe, Teresa Palmer, Judy Davis, Lee Cormie

Directed by Rod Hardy

Adapted from Michael Noonan's 1963 novel, this summer swoon follows four orphans growing up in the Australian outback. David Wiegand of San Francisco Chronicle says it's "uplifting ... Real entertainment with sweetness and light." Jeanne Thomson of Washington Post dismisses it as "torturally unaware." Kirk Honeycutt of The Hollywood Reporter asserts: "Dramatic moments are small but exquisitely rendered."

Harsh Times

Stars: Christian Bale, Eva Longoria, Freddy Rodriguez, JK Simmons

Directed by David Ayer

A former soldier (Bale) embarks on a journey of self-destruction on the mean streets of LA. Stephen Holden of New York Times sums that by the time it "builds to a melodramatic finale, it has worn out [the viewer's] patience." Jim Ridley of Village Voice says: "Whenever political statement ... is swamped by obnoxious broken envy." David Schwartz of Daily Mirror hails it as "bleak, black but brilliant." Hackneyed is Ayala Iriddi.

Wedding Daze

Stars: Jason Biggs, Isla Fisher, Jon Favreau, Mark Consuelos

Directed by Michael Ian Black

On a date, a lovelorn guy (Biggs) proposes to a waitress (Fisher) to get over a heartache. Helen O'Hara of Empire may agree that this flick, originally titled "The Pleasure of Your Company" is "predictable but truly charming in places." David Nusair of Reel Film Reviews notes that it's "an inventive, sporadically hilarious, affable romantic comedy." Eddie Cockrell of Variety disagrees: It's "grotesquely tiresome."

MOST TELEVISION PROGRAMS adhere to standard formats and production styles, but a few offer nuances unique to each rambunctious viewers' fancy.

There's "Dumbstruck," a quiz and game show with a difference. It subjects contestants to indignities and even painful conditions like answering questions while their answering questions while their tongues are being pulled down tightly encased their faces. Not only are they in pain, they also end up looking like priceless idiots a particularly vicious boxing match.

Then after a winner is pronounced, the show doesn't run out of amenities. The winner of a car still has to "defend" his prize by answering questions correctly. For every incorrect reply a part of his car is wrecked, or painted over in an ugly hue.

Sadistic here

Why do sadomasochistic subject themselves to such torments? They mean either for masochisms or sorts in dire need of attention, no matter how extreme. Whatever the reason, the show doesn't lack for prospective contestants who are here as being "decorated."

"Wow Mah Diva" also subjects people to indignities, but they're more of the psychologically painful sort. The show's resident sadistic sometimes secret host has low passersby and some or bystanders on the street — and then expect them to be "good sports" after the ordeal is over.

This sadistic host is taken even further by the "The Annie Kennedy Experience." The reality show pits itself off as a sexy expert-guru, demeaning how much driver a person can take before buckling.

At the last possible second, just as in "victim" is about to lose it, he's told that he's just been "Kenned." Poor dearings, now he also has to pay and host in for the TV-carnival as show that he's a "good sport."

The "Kenpd" show is more truthful as a social experiment. It does place clueless people in unusual situations — but not for sadistic "entertainment." The purpose is genuinely interested in finding out how Filipinos react to different situations. And test their values — not to betray, but to survive.

We like watching this program, because it teaches us how the Filipino psyche really operates — and why. On one particularly eye-opening telecast, Filipinos' "kind-hearted" was tested by having a man go from house to house, asking for cocktail of water.

Quite a number of people chose to help, and a couple of families even came out to talk to the "kind-hearted searcher" and also gave him a sandwich to assuage his perceived hunger.

Incidentally, Ellen Tordesmon, recently conducted a similar "experiment" on her daily talk show, In disguise, she pushed a big wide-eyed sidewalk and asked passersby to help her.

What do you know? Most people ignored her obvious difficulty and continued on.

Dinner got a bad rap for many failings these days, so it's great to see that, when it comes to basics like helping others, they come out on top — and strolling the town.

Parental Control

At 8 p.m. Monday to Friday on the ETC channel, "Parental Control" shows what happens when parents are allowed to pick dates for their kids, so the "chivalrous" boyfriends or girlfriends they have can be replaced with "better" prospects more to the parents' liking.

A marked man

TAKE FIVE

Billy Crawford counts his tattoos and girlfriends, and unleashes a mouthful on the network wars

By Reynaldo Leo Dizon Jr.
and the Inquirer Entertainment Staff
Photos by Jon Victor Pascual

HIS BODY IS A WONDERland ... of tattoos.

He lifts his sleeves to reveal painted arms, and shirts a wave of ooohs and aahs.

International singer Billy Crawford admits it isn't the reaction he expected. He was, he explains, flirting to turn Marlene's (not a big fan of his "ism", in fact, she's trying to prevent the expansion of his body art.

Marked man is ... a mutant boy? Not exactly, though, in that sense, Billy is to person in Europe ...has remained downright Pinoy.

Plus, sun-crown, he speaks Tagalog fluently "He even knows how to speak Ilonggo."

More accompanied him to France the first time he tasted there when he was 17.

He recalls that he had a ball speaking in Tagalog with her, "knowing that no one could understand us." He's also like that having Wuan dad's son, he points out.

He's done hundreds of concerts, but dad-luck will be watching him for the first time on Saturday at the Araneta Coliseum for his solo show, "It's Time."

Also in the audience will be 20 producers (charting him out for a possible world tour), but he seems more excited about having his parents there.

What did you notice about local values?

There are so many! I can't describe how good they are. Like, the young dancers (who were on his GMA 7 talent search "Show") are synonymous, but they improve more quickly than most pros I've worked with.

It's because they're still hungry. They have the passion for dancing. They become used to the sore hours. My soccer director Ronald Cruz, who's from France, is amazed at the [discoveries] of talents. It's only the work style that he's a bit uneasy with.

What did you learn from performing abroad?

I learned to be professional and punctual. Also to perfect [my] strengths and the areas of weaknesses. There, I'm tested and screened are made to sing, dance, act — everything. There are a lot of last-minute changes. It keeps wrapped right before a show. The script would arrive last minute.

Some people thrive in the pressure, but newcomers suffer.

Do you think it means the development of local artists?

Television-org artists. Platforms (is also a) public. Instead of supporting artists, the public is really supporting the networks. There's even such a thing as network wars. When I was growing up on [GMA 7's] "That's Entertainment," we could never even say network-number ... guess in the other channels to promote our projects. That was why the industry was so much bigger. Now, there are limitations. But that's okay, business is business.

If someone asks your opinion on how to run things, would you give it?

I wouldn't tell anyone how to run things. But as an artist, I'd like to work with different people. I want to perform for everyone, not just a limited audience. [Otherwise] we can't grow as artists.

How much of your talents have you been allowed to show here, considering the limitations?

I'm limited to one channel [GMA 7] for now. But people are noticing names.

Maybe hope you also as hot-yes.

What did you learn from "That's Entertainment"?

"That's" was my foundation. I started when I was 4 and stayed until I was almost 12. I learned everything on that show: performing, hosting, acting, getting along with others.

With what group were you there?

Bamboo Group. With Jamed Aturan, Rita Avila, Jean Garcia, Marilyn Reynes, Jenno Ubina, Judy Ann Santos, Anna Abreu.

What happens when you bump into your old "That's" castmates?

I just saw Jeffrey Gerard, Brylle Mendoza and Jigs Garcia recently Anghaiten. [But] we try to keep in touch. Once, they brought old photo albums filled with pictures from our group outings. I was always the host of [also since] I was the youngest. They used to kid me about my hairdo: The apple cut.

How do you feel when you see your old pictures?

I laugh because at times I was wearing the same outfit as Kaya Gerna [Montero]. Stress here.

Kaya Gerna! Miss Me.
Miss German. Hahaha!

But he loves you.

He's my mom. He has helped a lot of people in the industry.

How sure are you discovered?

When I was four, I watched "That's" in the old GMA 7 studio along Edsa. Nito Mirabiles pulled me out of the crowd. Mismo. Ajuro ito. Boys Cuenco was surprised that there was a kid onstage. He asked if I could sing. I belted out "Born in the USA"...a lie because I was born here.

What did you learn from doing "Dominion: Prequel to the Exorcist"?

That was tough. The hairy thing was, we shot in the same studio (Channels in Italy) as "The Passion of the Christ." One day, you'd see Jesus (Jim Caviezel) and the devil, too, on the same lot. The hardest part was working with experienced actors. Some were method actors. One guy was so into method that I actually thought he was a real priest. He seldom came out of his room, which looked like a shrine. On my first day, the director, Mr. Paul Schrader, pulled me aside and said, "I don't know what you do. I don't care what you've done. You have to prove yourself to this film."

After the shoot, the movie encountered problems.

The director and the producers didn't get along. [Producer] Joann Robinson assigned a commercial movie, but the director hated guns. So the producers made another movie with some of the same actors for another $10 million. It didn't do very well. Then my film "Dominion" was released on DVD and in selected theaters, and we got better reviews.

That didn't discourage you about Hollywood?

Definitely not. I just got an offer to do a direct film called "Back Down," also. I was supposed to read for a film with Whoopi Goldberg, but it got pushed back ... and I need to move on.

You mentioned artistic hunger, are you still hungry?

Of course. I'm [only 25]. I've achieved a lot, but there's always something new to excel to.

What are your goals?

I want to have an established production company. I want to write and produce songs for other people. Maybe do films.

Where are you based now?

Los Angeles, for now. I spent five years in Paris, one year in London. I'm supposed to go back to LA after the concert, to finish my fourth album. Under MGM, "BC [USA] [U.S. "Bass Down it here.

What do you value and not value about the Philippines?

Everything ... except for Filipino time. Hahaha. And the late-minute calls.

From the shrink?

Ohmmy is ohmmy. Time in our own faculties, there's gossip. I don't play interior-interpreter.

Speaking of which, what did you learn from the whole who's-the-better-kisser: Wendy Mocon-or-Ai Consepcion controversy?

If you make a bad decision, there's a consequence. [Answering that question] had a bad consequence. I'm now going to pick Jipkoi on my mouth.

BC admitted that you had crushed her.

Who wouldn't crush her? She's a really big hyun. She's a sweet girl. But I don't want to comment anymore.

Does Mandy Moore know about that intrigue?

I think I should be the first one to see her when she arrives next month [for a concert]. I'll pick her up at the airport and talk to her before anyone else does. (laughs). She's very sweet, too. I was like da-ble her first boyfriend.

How many girlfriends have you had?

I've had four to five long relationships.

How long was the longest?

Three and a half years. I am definitely into long relationships. But if it doesn't work out, it doesn't work out.

HE'S HAD four to five long relationships, he confesses.

HE GOT the genius on Bora-Bora; the rose of the Polynesian tattoos, in France.

Speaking of tattooing ... How many tattoos do you have?

Side: My right and left arms are full of tats. (He counts.) Five.

There's a map of the Philippines.

Yes, of course. That's Impressive. All my tattoos tell a story.

On my right arm is the name of my company, DPAD Productions. It says the thing ... Also on the right arm is a Polynesian design representing moon, protection, anger, softness. The lizard has my initials on it. On my left arm is an angel with a microphone and the world in her hands. There's also a space cowboy who represents my ladies. The Philippine map symbolizes my roots. There's also a quote, written in the ancient Philippine language[-alibata]. It says "Long friday, maraming pasgroup."

Where did you have them made?

All done in France, except for the geeks, which I got on Boracay.

Do you wish to add to your tattoo collection?

I really want some more ... it can be addictive. I want to do my entire back, but my mom is not happy about my tattoos.

THE BUILT superstar has threatened (but is more likely) to strip (naked) so that he can spend Thanksgiving with his fans after his body art, though.

ENTERTAINMENT

What Snooky Serna needs now

SNOOKY Serna

APPOINTMENT, NOT ANOTHER INTERview—on TV, radio or print.

Her latest conflict started on Ed Mo's radio show. Asked by the shock jock how she lost her virginity, she said she was only 14... and then the shocker... she had been "raped."

(2005 TV "Showbiz Central" immediately booked the ex-child star for a roll-all Q&A.

But Snooky refused to go into "graphic details," on account of her two daughters. So why grant the interview at all?

Atty. John Lapus wanted it out to help other victims. Then why was he persistent about revealing the identity of the supposed assailant?

"Who he is leading man or an actor who played your father?" "Where did it happen?"

Snooky threatened to walk out. That line of questioning wasn't part of the deal, she reclaimed on air. Later she answered one of the supposedly offensive questions just the same.

Also, the alleged crime happened "sa bahay," Snooky said. In the end, the network editor young moment: "Just because a man is handsome or looks gentle, doesn't mean he's not [capable of] rape."

Another cancel-worthy!

Sexy outsiders

Two sexy actresses—siblings at, one employed by ABS-CBN, the other by GMA 7...Bravo.

FIRST EVER. Actress Sienna Walster wins the award for Best Performance—Female at the first ever National Movie Awards at the Royal Festival Hall in London Sept. 28. [illegible]

CHRISTIAN Bautista [illegible]

Edmund Tolle

RUSHES

Singapore, reportedly to re-pay jewellers of its shows for emails

Ngayon Mahirap mahanap nanagong asaga... maybe matulog ang alimasan... dahil nagiging komplikado kung mga ibapay ibagat kaya tendency media. malabo. (Ang hirap mga ano.)

Love this guy... or, gay

• Malaysia Dahlia on Dating or with Carmina Villaroel since revealing his sexuality:

"Yun 'yung bukod tanging, isang isang kinasasapan ko bago ako mag-start sa teleserbisyo... Hindi naako-do romantic ang pag-usapan rooms. At last, it was during very wee hong. Pa-david buong lamcandlelight dinner but I'm sure it would be okay [if we did.]." (If only newsgirls were one this relentless. [OOPS! Is that too much to ask?]

• Paolo Contis, asked if he might do as Ding doing Dimter has done, posing sexy on magazine covers and eatwalks:

"Sweating eastern 'wan... kasobrage right tayong, right sides 'time! Singalong ...nag-topless rkindo-ako, hesitation. Ano nga dated sa dame." (Uh, did we get that right?)

No 'Rush Hour' for

HONG KONG— It's the movie that put Jackie Chan on the major league in the US, but the Hong Kong star isn't a fan of "Rush Hour."

Chan said he made the first installment of the series in 1998 only to woo the US market.

In a blog entry on his website www.Sunday he said: "After we finished filming, I felt very disappointed... I didn't appreciate [it] and I did not like the entire story... too Americanized... I didn't understand American humor."

...

Top of the talk shows

For those who missed Sen Sarsfield's show his guh bats:

• Dennis Trillo on the rumor tag "Baby Ho" on the runner's crib of former beauty queen Cathrine Aguilar's newborn Calix Andrew:

"Nung-ipot lang... na-gumawa 'yung apelido ko... baby-do naman [out ah]."

• Clarifying his relationship with Cathrine: "Matagal ko [ito nang girlfriend, four or five years]... Inspi-yer ako pero hindi ako GMA...

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Cesar has three new projects with ABS-CBN

IT'S ALWAYS A DELIGHT TO HANG OUT with my energy-crazy director Cesar Montano at his roof Indian Straw Bellarosa Dist. Center, Quezon City). His works of art, which are for sale, adorn the walls. Next to eating and directing, painting is Dubuy's passion.

"I am excited about my three new projects in ABS-CBN—a remake of 'Mara,' a boxing reality TV show and a still-untitled show," he told me over dinner. "Aside from that, I am directing an indie film, 'Indigenous Debris,' which I cannot [say] in the set."

Even his wife, Sunshine Cruz, is busy with TV shows. She's one of Dubuy's leading ladies and she will also do a soap with Manuel Montano and Ai-Ai de las Alas titled "Naga-Inda" to be shot in Japan.

I teased him, "It's good you allowed Shine to resume her career. Now you get jealous anymore if she has other leading men?"

Dubuy laughed. "Shine also long ang may kissing scene. Ako lang? And she has to be home by midnight. Okay na rin na she'll be working, para di niya ako ladlad-magsalo sa landing-tipong mga pagseselos."

He and Shine are enjoying their three daughters. "Pakabata-bata ay ibon pinasasaki-ko dowley. Our second child may pagka-mortal na amuke," the doting dad said.

His other daughter Angela, who runs their resto with her hubby as her sweeper, told me that Dubuy refuses to be called "Tito."

Dolly Anne Carvajal

Dolly Wood

Right fully out. He definitely does not look like a grandchild pa. He's just a grand lactor.

No surprise

I wasn't a bit surprised when Brenda Mills finally admitted that he's the dad of Carlene Aguilar's baby boy. He's no match of a gentleman to deny such moment. Although he said on TV that he and Carlene were no longer a couple, the birth of Calixto could prove the way for a reconciliation. Or do they have an agreement to keep their relationship low key, as it doesn't go off key with too much intrigue?

Budding romance

The sensational love team of Shaina Magdayao and Jhoemar Garcia will be unveiled via Regal Entertainment's "Hide and Seek" opens Oct. 31). As Mother Lily says, "The more you hide, the more ghosts will seek you." Aside from her gut feel for what makes a good horror movie, Mother also has a sixth sense.

Jessica reminds me so much of her mom Ana. We used to hang out when she was still doing Jessica's dad, Nico Antonio.

Will her budding romance with Mart go the same way as her parents' tender love story during their "That's Entertainment" days? Or will their hearts play hide-and-seek?

Humbling experience

I'm happy for Shyr Valdez who's back in the scene with Wild Eyes Productions' TV movie "Search & Destroy" which will be shown in the History Channel in the US next week. It's about the tragic abduction of Grucia and Blanche Bautista in Pinamar.

Shyr's portrayal of Grucia was a life-changing experience for her. "It made me realize cruelty is in highest form," she says. "Pretending Grucia's unfortunate fate did me and made me thankful that none of my loved ones ever experienced such inhuman acts."

In show biz parlance, Shyr Valdez is no "Ate Valdez" [Jaworski] with this comeback project of hers.

From Prisons

Here are portions of my "Sir Prisons Pancakes's e-mail to me from the US:

Dear Dodi,

I live in Connecticut now. Just a train ride to NY. Dun na kasi nagpatirahan ang anak ko. Bahk sa Brooklyn noong ako. Pero ang hirap ng sa Brooklyn na madrugo noong sa mga dagat na hindi pa ang mga sinisikap sabi... Sinabi-ko...Ito ang dapat ng mundo ko dito ngayon. Hehehe, I miss nothing. I have help, labs ng pag-aaral ako sa kalye, at LL Mike pa lumingon sa akin. Ito ang pinakamasaya sa buhay ko. Sana ay ganoon din sa iyo. Ingat ka palagi.

Mwah!

Gen

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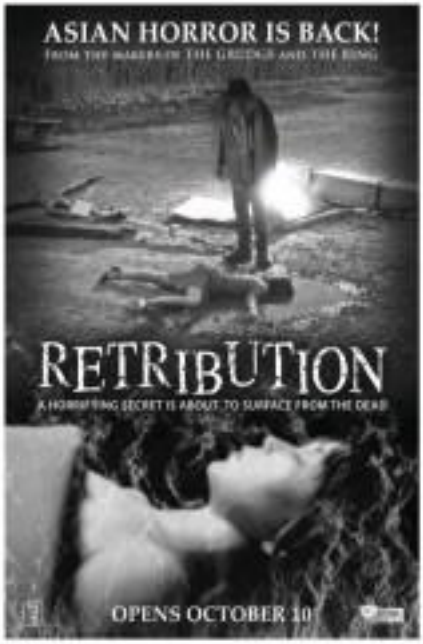

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METRO EAST

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PIONEER

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STA. ROSA

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 THE HOST
3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
4 THE BRAVE ONE

LIPA

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN
3 NANCY DREW
4 BRATZ

DASMARIÑAS

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 RESIDENT EVIL 3
3 THE HOST
4 NO RESERVATION

IMUS

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 RESIDENT EVIL 3
5 ROGUE ASSASSIN
6 SHOOT 'EM UP

ANGELES

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 THE HOST
3 BRATZ
4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME

TARLAC

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 DAYWATCH
3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY

STARMILLS

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU	4 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
2 BRATZ	5 ROGUE ASSASSIN
3 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME	6 THE BRAVE ONE

BACOLOD

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN
3 THE LAST LEGION
4 THE BRAVE ONE
5 STOMP THE YARD
6 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY

ILOILO

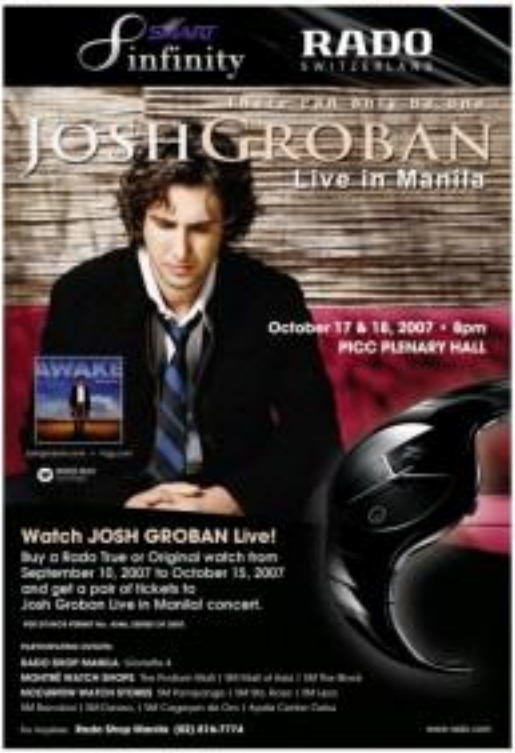
1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN
3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
4 NANCY DREW
5 BATZ / I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
6 DAGTANG

MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING



What Snooky...

SOAP OPERATHIC. Singer and bassist of this group "Fiction Plane"—and son of Sting—Joe Sumner performs on Sept. 29 at the "Stade du France" in Saint-Denis, Northern Paris, for the first part of the concert of "The Police."

From page B1

would because we're just friends." (Low shoot, "Uhm not gay!")

Basic ingredients

•Elaine Kamon on her relationship with Richard Gutierrez:

"Ung una kong sa-answer dun sana kaya na. Sana lang una sa unang-unsol nasa kanya na rin. Use kung yun nasa kanya na rin. Kung mahal ng-answer kung hindi nagiging close sa iba." (These basic ingredients... got that.)

•Howard she say "yes" if he/she started love?

"He's really a nice guy. He makes me laugh. He's understanding. Open siyang mag-mahal ng-sa-sarili, mahalagang ng-sa-sarili." ("These were basic ingredients... got that.)

Opposite of nice

•Vicky Morales on hearing reports that daughter Kuel was pregnant:

"It's not true."

•Pinoy guitarist Eric Clear on reconciling with his girlfriend, model-actress Yi Jun Hwanmala Somerset:

"You realize what you've lost only when it's not there anymore. After a month, nag-usap kami... Umabot 'yung conversation na kumbinsyon... I still love her. So we decided to try to work things out."

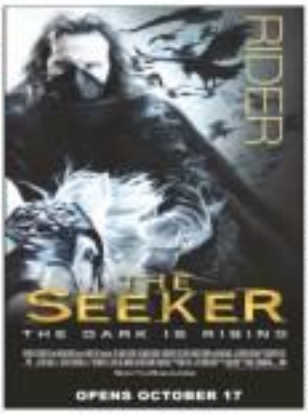
•Pinoymovie.com women-fetched beat her up: "Ayaw ko na sanang sagutin 'yan kasi nasa stage ako kami ng pinag-uusapan namin 'yung mga problema namin... Kung nagkaroon kami ng argument ... dun sana kami sa Quiapo na... Ayoko na pong magbigay ng detalye... dahil hindi na po nakakatulong sa akin sa showbiz kung ano-ano ang sasabihin ng tao." (Was that a long-winded yes-he-did?)

•Alex Melendez on why she chose to keep mum about her separation from Martin Jalosjos:

"Because of my child dun. This is private... and I'd like to find [out] it privately. I want to keep quiet about everything." (That's hard to do in nationwide TV)

•Alex, pushed a little deeper:

"So much as I want to tell you in detail what's happening in my life, she only-thing I can say right now is, it's over." (Sunday)



AT THE CINEMAS

GLORIETTA 1	1 WEDDING DAZE	2 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	3 [illegible]	4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
GLORIETTA 4	1 EVENING	2 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	3? DECEMBER BOYS	
	4 HARRY TIMES	5 [illegible]	6 WEDDING DAZE	7 NO RESERVATIONS
GREENBELT 1	1 DECEMBER BOYS	2 WEDDING DAZE		
GREENBELT 2	1? NO RESERVATIONS	2? SPANISH FILM FESTIVAL		
	3 HARRY TIMES	4 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	5 DECEMBER BOYS	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1? WEDDING DAZE	2 DECEMBER BOYS		
	3 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	4 I HAVE PROMISED TO GIVE A LIGHT	5 NO RESERVATIONS	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	2 SAWAKTAN	3 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU	4 SHADOW OF JAPAN
MARKET! MARKET!	1 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU		
	3 I HAVE PROMISED TO GIVE A LIGHT	4 WEDDING DAZE	5 DECEMBER BOYS	
TRINOMA	1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU	2 EVENING	3 [illegible]	4 DECEMBER BOYS
	5 NO RESERVATIONS	6 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	7? WEDDING DAZE	

AT THE MALLS

Ayala Malls

Glorietta — SPI Appliances Roadshow, September 28 to October 10 at Glorietta Activity Center

Greenbelt — Viva Mexico: A Traditional Mexican Costume Exhibit, October 3 to 16, Greenbelt 3 Lobby

Alabang Town Center — Fitness At The Town, September 3 to December 14, 2007, Mon / Wed / Fri, 6 PM, Town Plaza

Ayala Center Cebu — SPI Automobiles Exhibit, October 11 to 14, Paseo

Market! Market! — Manyakstep: "Apat Dapat Dapat Apat" (Ball Four), October 5, 5 PM, Activity Center

Cinemalaya — Repertory Philippines presents LOGE'S LABOUR'S LOST, September 13 - October 7, 2007

Ayala Museum — GOSSETT: Bird Lovers Higher, September 18 to October 20, 2007, Museum Hour

Tri Noma — Rhythm Academy: Boys with the Rhythmic Boys, October 6, 7 PM, Trilogy Park

LIVE VIA SATELLITE

No Commercial Breaks! Larger Than Life! Guaranteed Seats!

THE MOST AWAITED FIGHT IS ON!

SUNDAY OCTOBER 7, 8AM (Manila Time)

Glorietta 1 • Glorietta 4 • Greenbelt 3
Alabang Town Center • Market! Market!
Ayala Center Cebu • Trinoma

BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW!

America's Power Pop Band
live at the Ayala Malls!

THE CLICK FIVE

Greenbelt 3 Park, October 23, 2007, 7PM

Alabang Town Center Activity Center, October 24, 2007, 2PM

Glorietta · Greenbelt · Alabang Town Center · Ayala Center Cebu · Trinoma